MULTATULI.

LETTERS.

Contributions To The Knowledge of His Life

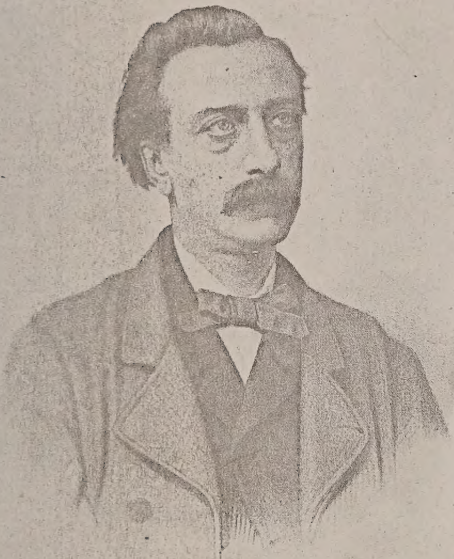
Arranged and Illustrated

By

M. DOUWES DEKKER-HAMMINCK-SCHEPEL.

EIGHTH VOLUME

Translation by
Nicolaas Steelink.



MULTATULI IN 1865
LITHOGRAPHIE MITKIEWICZ — MULTATULI-MUSEUM)

FOREWORD

By

Translator.

A few words in addition to this, my translation of the eighth volume of Multatuli's letters which, as I went along, I began to consider as yet the most difficult to translate of all the preceding seven. Gradually my mind weakened under the realization that here was indeed a man who was entitled to the nom de plume "Multatuli" , He who has borne much. And so it was often difficult for me to continue. But each time my master said: continue, and each time I said: I will. But there was this endless grief.

And so I went through thick and thin, and when the Master used a lower case instead of a higher one, to please a whim that he forbade others to follow, or mixed past and present tenses, and took other liberties with so called established grammar, I went at my task the best way I could with high regard for Him: The Master!

And here and there, and now and then, the choice was not easy and may have resulted in a wrong choice, which I ask the indulgent reader to condone.

Nicolaas Steelink.

TO MRS. DOUWES DEKKER - VAN WYNBERGEN.

I.

Coblenz, Wednesday evening, 9 Jan.
(1867)

Dearest Tine! At last something good. Eight days ago I complained that people made such a terrific noise above my head, and I was told that this could not be helped, and if it did not suit us the best thing to do was to move. So that would be the 15th, but we were in arrears on the rent and good advice was dear on how we could raise the necessary money.

While I was wandering my head had not been fit to work. And there was something else besides: I was in debt to van Helden for something like f600. The thought of it frightened me, and the impossibility to square it up all at once undermined my courage. The immediacy was such that the time was not left me to finish anything.

Suddenly I decided to overcome the fear of the debt to van Helden and start to work. I asked him to send me an extra f10 per sheet and then to wind up the matter that way. I wrote piece -it's almost ready- of six sheets: A few remarks in pursuance of Bosscha's Prussia and the Netherlands. Just now I got van Helden's letter stating that he he will take care that before the 15th I shall have the needed f60 and that I can continue. Well, that's the main thing. I am working! At last. Now I'm enjoying it, and I shall work comme un nègre. as Tissot of Menado used to say. I promise to free you

before August, and if I reach my goal you will see the Paris Fair.. I hope to deliver 15 to 2o sheets per month for several months so as not to be in need for some time, to square that advance from van Helden in the course of time and have enough left over to fetch you from Milan and set up house keeping. Of course, I'll send you my brochure. That thing is of no great importance but as an inducement to get going again it has a great deal of value. This week Mimi made the dispatches for the Haarlemmer, all I have to do is copy them. She does all she can to help me. I'm sending an issue of such a Haarlemmer. That article "From the Rhine" is ours. Perhaps it is too boring to read, but the owners of the Courant want it so. It requires attention to get that bit of harping together every five days, more or less properly, and before all not to include anything of one's own ideas, since that's not allowed. When I'll be really at work it will bore me terribly, but I won't drop it of course. I would like very much that Mimi could take complete charge of it but the objection to that is that her hand (or not mine) will be recognized. I would like to find a means to change this later on, f25 per month is not much, but still always something.

Well I shall have more joy in writing to you, now that I can see delivery. I have been ashamed for never being able to send you help. I am curious to know how Edu's birthday party went. As soon as I can I hope to make good my shortcoming in it. Non too has so much coming to her, the lovely child! Oh, I never eat without thinking how much the children would enjoy it. Today we had

broccoli for dinner. Mimi is becoming an expert in those things. Ah, there I see a few more lines in your letter again. When I read them the first time I hardly noticed, but now I read them with joy. You say that you trust that before August I will have found something no doubt.. I too trust that now. So be very brave in bearing up under all the unpleasantness. There is a end in view.

I have a lovely letter from Siet. That pleases me very much. She is faithful and could not bear the brouille.

For various reasons we will now go Köln. So write hither poste restante. As soon as I have an address I will send it to you.

II.
Köln, 8 February 1867. evening.

Dearest Tine, good girl! That I didn't write to you all this time had its causes. I got your letter here in Koeln, poste restante. My address now is: Komoedienstrasse 14b.

My latest letter was still from Coblenz. Then I had hopes of departing from there the 15th Jan, but the money from van Helden did not arrive. So waiting! At last we are here. I've had bitter, miserable days. The after effects of it still make me feel lame and dispirited.

But see van Helden, who is very concerned and sincere has exerted himself to correct the oversight. Now I am sitting here lovely and hope to accomplish much. We have bought a small lamp to hang above my writing table, a little clock for 3¼ thaler, you know that I've

lost my watch, a few pots and pans, paid a month rent in advance, in short, all kinds of things that in comparison with the past are luxury and offer a wealth of rest and, once more now I hope indeed to be able to work.

My brochure contra Bosscha is finished (has been quite a while, but the printing goes slowly) You should receive two copies. I think van Helden will be able to mail them within 3 or 4 days. I have given him your address. I hope and think it will please you, I think it's well written, quite fluent and full. You have not read anything from me for so long.

Did you receive the Haarlemmer Courant? Those news items From the Rhine are difficult for this reason: they are boring. That courant can use only dry facts. I am not allowed to put in anything of my own. When I want to smuggle in some ideas I say: one reads in the Mainzer Beobachter.... (N B. a paper that does not exist.)

Besides I have received an invitation to speak at the Cercle artistique, literaire et scientifique at Antwerp for fr.200. After thinking it over (Willème, Mitkiewiwicz!) I accepted because I am short of money again and lack the courage to ask van Helden for some at this moment. Only when I shall have sent him about 10 or more sheets of print. But I have not got them ready yet because of that worry in recent weeks. Now I hope having overcome that and

and then.... go ahead! If I can maintain a bit of calmness, of which there is a chance, I will quickly work out van Helden's advance and then with f 40 per page I will speedily advance, so that I'll be able to free you and again will be united with you and the children....

All the time that I wandered so I didn't write to you. I'm just getting a little calmer after all that worry, although I still have trouble with the police who absolutely insist on a pass. I wrote for one to the minister of Foreign Affairs (then Heemskerk, Az) but the boor has not answered. Such nonsensical things are boring and agitating. In the future I shall take care always to have a pass with me.

I do not mail this one tonight because I happened to be out of stamps. Probably you would say: "mail sans postage", but I do not know how you manage with your five francs a month! poor lovely Tine! Well, I hope to improve. When I do that Antwerp reading I'll be quite free for the moment and hope to do something quickly, so that I can dispose of the van Helden advance.

Imagine this d'Ablaing! For the right to publish my works (Ideas*

*) That is Volumes I and II)

Loveletters, Free Labor and Re-issues) f 5000! Nota Bene: After having made so much on it. How does that square with his settlement with me? And with keeping my pitiful belongings that I left behind there? In fact, van Helden was inclined to buy everything from him, but that sum is unheard of, after so much has been sold. What's left must be nearly exhausted. It's flattering to me but it proves how badly d'Ablaing

has treated me when he now, after having sold so much of my writings, asks another f 5000 for copy rights! And then to hold my books etc. (damn it, your pedigree is among it) for back rent, account with the office of publicity, and delivered anthologies (my own work) that I donated for the promotion of our business (my other works)!

Do you know what really bothers me? I can't find my maçonnical papers. Were they left at Brussels? Are they at Amsterdam? This is certain: I don't have them here. Mimie thinks she has seen them in Amsterdam, so that they are not in Brussels. When that is so I hope they'll show up as soon as I am able to free our belongings at d'Ablaing.

It will be a moment of real celebration when I can send you something. Quickly, I hope. Kiss the dear children.

TO C. BUSKEN HUET.

III.

Coblenz 11 January 1867.

Dear mister Huet. Just now I received the £50. I thank you for your intervention and need not tell you how it hurts me to have caused you inconvenience. No, certainly, when matters stand so once more, I sincerely hope that it will not happen again. Grasping it, I cannot. But there is so much beyond my grasp.

The copy of my brochure lies in Amsterdam. Has for the past several weeks. No doubt it will come out soon. I am not satisfied with it. All but one of the strings of my lute have been broken and it sounds unpleasantly. If I did not have to correct proves of my writings I assure you that I would read anything of it. But one cannot give more than one has, be it only wormwodd.

Friendly greetings to you and your wife.

t. a. v.

Douwes Dekker.

IV.

Koeln 26 January 1867.

Dear mister Huet. I am writing you from a coffee shop where I sit pondering what address I shall give you, since I'll probably start

wandering again.

For many reasons I wanted to be in Koeln. In order to arrive there after a proper farewell to Coblenz, I needed this advance in connection with an agreement with my publisher that he would take care that one the 14th I would have money.

For me it was an artful combination to rent a room in Koeln to suit me, where I could sit quietly, to pay for that room in advance as is demanded of a stranger who has pitiful baggage, and then I would work hard. That was the plan.

Well, that little brochure against Bosscha I had completely ready. Your advance came quite on time. But van Helden, or his employe "forgot" to send me what had been promised.

I waited, waited, had to leave my room early the morning of the 15th and received the money from van Helden 3 days later. In the meantime in an inn! Only on the 20th did I arrive in Koeln. Again in an inn after first of all trying to find a room. On monday I found a room, but there was no stove. It was to arrive the next day. It was very cold monday. Tuesday the stove came, but not before late in the evening. The next day I was dunned for rent, 12 thaler. I did not have them. The man who had observed my pitiful belongings beca me shamefully impudent and called the police. Van Helden who, of course, was very upset (he being very sincere) that through his fault I had gotten to wandering so, promised to send other money as quickly as possible which, of course, I have to work for, but that was nothing if only I could sit quietly. That other money, f 40, came only this morning. All that time I hardly

got anything to eat. I left my umbrella in a shop in order to borrow 10 groschen. Your courants for which the demand was six pfennigs (return Coblenz) I could not have (only till after the umbrella loan). And during all that time I was harassed by the police. Just now having received money I paid for my room and had to tell them I would soon leave, since I cannot do anything there. Now I'm pondering on what to do.

My latest bulletin I had finished at Coblenz and mailed from here. I had hopes of sending one today, but that's impossible now. I hope I can sit down somewhere tomorrow.

That I told you a few things (oh, a small part, and only lightly sketched) of my life in the past 8 days is -do not take it ill- not for your benefit. I received such meager response as often as I did write you a few things, than that I would feel a desire to convey a few confidences. It's purely in my own interest. I know that:"he seems crazy, now here than there.... he doesn't know what he wants," or something similar. I am very well aware of what I want. I carry on a difficult struggle in order to find a little corner where I can work. That son of man with his stone is ridiculous! Still, I must confess that this text is continually in my ears.

Oh, I shall have my revenge as soon as I have a room where I can work. So much indignation cannot remain sans being uttered. And that uttering shall be "beautiful"!

My only request is that you do not take it ill if today and maybe tomorrow too there will be no little bulletin appear. I claim that usually I am very prompt in living up to my duties. If I fail it's

indeed force majeure!

I am not in a friendly mood about you. I deserve better than your stiff little notes. And about the information that the Messrs. Enschede added to your letter a hardly noticeable tint of indignation. Really I shall not again ask those gentlemen for an advance. From now on they will not have to pay before other value of what I deliver is securely in their possession, although the pay is small though well enough, but still only f 25!!

I have decided and am compelled to stay here at least another two days. Within that time I hope to send you my new address

After polite greetings,

t. a. v. Douwes Dekker.

V.

Koeln 16 March, ' 67.

Dear Mister Huet. It pleased me to see your hand and immediately after the receipt of yesterday's letter I went to the post office. The head carrier recalled having seen your letter quite well and even recognized your hand. (Pretty strong in such a large office as that of Koeln). He, now being aware that I daily get a courant, and besides nearly every day receive letters, could not comprehend how it was possible that the brochure (and probably also the letter) had been returned to sender. The mail carrier who should have known me, just then was not at the office and I will return monday. In the mean time the bureau chief thought that the letter, just as the little book really had been returned and he was almost as upset about it as I was. He disarmed me by his zeal to clear

up the matter. I dare not bet do swear (Irish distinction between prudence and recklessness) that your letter lies at the post office at Bloemendaal, awaiting a certain periodical time to be sent to The Hague, and there be opened. You are aware that every year thousands .... never return.

My letter should have been delivered here in spite of the wrong address. That this has not happened is somewhat manifest by the anger of my landlord on Hochstrasse who most probably confused the carrier with a brusque answer: abgereist! or something like that.

But if you succeed in getting your letter back, will you then send it to me? I would appreciate it very much. As well as the brochure of Prof. Scholten.

I have been to Antwerp. (a dour 3rd class trip of eleven hours) and have spoken there twice. The first time almost unprepared, the second time not at all. Since at seven o'clock in the evening I did not know what my subject would be. And it was accordingly! That I say from full conviction. But see the Netherlandism that reigns there took me under its wings and it met with approval. Today I got a letter from the Société: La Libre Pensée, with an invitation to speak at their hall too. I have accepted it for next sunday. The previous time at the Cercle artistique, scientific et literairé.

Haven't you read anything in the Précurseur of that équipee? And is it the system, not yours, but of the Haarlemmer, to make no

mention of it? Would they also have ignored it if it had been Cremer or any other innocent practioner of Netherland letters? I think not. Listen, that silence is a deloyal weapon in Netherland, and the persecution of the French press compared to it are chocolate creams. Likewise now my brochure. Everyone has the right to contradict me, of course, but that ignoring, I think, is treacherous. Were it possible to pretend that I am not read, then it could pass. In that event it might be claimed that I was not worthy of attention, but I am read and widely. What cowardly tactics! Even when they do treat of me it is to say that nothing is said. (Viz a recent issue of Handelsblad). Believe me, that I do not complain about that as some one who desires contradiction so that he might get into the limelight. In spite of the tactic of the Holl. press, I am more popular than I prefer sometimes. So it's not for that reason. But I resent the disloyalty, since it runs into ignorance, or pretended ignorance in quite other things than writing. Is it just the increase, now being considered, in the remuneration of the Interior Chiefs in Java, is treated sans naming me? "The Goernment acknowledges.... " etc. (Viz: the last part of your article: 's Gravenhage in the Courant of 25 February.)*

*) The Government acknowledges that in addition to the lawful services rendered, the Interior Chiefs demand deliveries and services, that lead to extortion and theft, abuses that are oppressive to the native population, and to which should come an end. In so far that the publication of 6 November 1834 is not honored, the Government wishes to introduce another rule.)

Oh well, there the Government acknowledges all kinds of things that I have claimed, and for which claiming I have been punished. Must I now oppose that? When all that I have to say about it is true (and it's easy to be truthful), and will be spoiled by the ego that inevitably will be transparent? To be sure I had said and claimed and maintained, at great sacrifice, all that now is acknowledged by the government, and still it's thought to be immodest when I insist on.... yes, on what? Well, that I was right, and did not deserve to be treated as has happened.

It is a puzzle to me that no one in Holland, out of a simple feeling for justice, makes that observation, and I am so discouraged about that system of ignorance in other things (speeches, brochures, etc.) since that system makes possible the concealment of other, principal things. It would not happen in France. Neither in Belgium. Not even in Germany. I do not believe that there is a country where the press is so impotent in its freedom as it is in Holland. Yonder it's not allowed to print everything, but what is printed is effective. In Holland printing is permitted, aye yes, why not, there's no attention paid anyhow to what's written. What innessary trouble Napoleon makes for himself and how unappreciative is Emile de Girardin!

Do you have my piece against Bosscha? I have written to van Helden to offer you a copy and sent him a supplementary paper. Is it not "what is usually called piquant"? And is not the announcement in Handelsblad "what is commonly called insipid"?

am nearer to a child than some one who is so learned. This grieves me terrifically, that others teach my children.

Tell me for once if at some time you received my IInd bundle Ideas? I fear you didn't. I was wandering then and in a later forwarded trunk I find many loose sheets. I am sorry that you never asked about it. Do you not have, for instance, my new proof for the thesis of Pythagoras? 'Tis simpler and clearer than all preceding ones, no one will deny it, and I would ask you to help me establishing that it belongs to me. Otherwise I will, after some time, read in some courant that it is a discovery of Van Lennep or Van Twist. 'Tis a trifle, you will say. True, but whoso has little or nothing, has to keep his trifles together.

After friendly greetings also to your wife, I am

Entirely yours,

Douwes Dekker.

I shall get the brochure, shall I not? And the returned letter, if you get it? Or otherwise what it contains.

O, o, those f 25 per month I cannot afford to miss, but how those little bulletins bore me. I assure you that those things in the long run cost me exertion. Today I informed the people: "that the festivities of the marriage of Flanders with Hohenzoll. would last two days." How deep, how important, how impressive! But added is: "that this is claimed." So in the event that the count of Flanders, or the bride, go beyond their strength, and celebrate for 48½ hours, and might it be that the bride fainted before the expiration of the second 24 hours, then the responsibility of your correspondent is à couvert. I have said: "it is claimed". 'Tis a boring tale.

Imagine in Antwerp a political (or impolitical, no matter) little fire is kept burning against Belgicism in favor of joining North Netherland. Thus if goes! In Maastricht people want to be Belgian, in Flanders, Dutch. I am not pro-Dutch, but I would warn Holland against drawing in such a Trojan horse. There is life and glow in Belgian Netherlands, and I doubt whether they would allow themselves to be rules from The Hague.

My wife continually writes me about the lovely help she receives from mister Potgieter. I am very appreciative of it, but at the same time discouraged for it being necessary. Through many cares and exertion she has become very weak and I must absolutely see to it to bring to an end her very difficult position. The children are well and very good. But I would much prefer to educate them myself. I am a born teacher, and always had the name of being very good in explaining something. Besides, I like it, and just because I do not know so many things, I am repeatedly forced to learn something new, and so

TO MISTER K.RIS.*

VI.

Koeln, 13 Februaey 1867.

Dear Ris, It indeed gave me pleasure to hear something from you although I had preferred to see more favorable information from you than that your wife and daughter are ailing. Life is a struggle! If there were a God (which as you know I deny) he should be ashamed of himself. For me too life is a struggle, nothing else! I am sick of it. One tries and attempts and hopes, and so the time passes. The people who (while always talking of god and heaven) take good care of themselves, might after all be on the right track.

Thanks for the two brochures which van Helden promptly has forwarded to me. Yes, I'll see to it that you will get my writings. And let me know if you have my ideas in full. I guess not. At least I have many loose sheets left. When I hear from you how much you have, I will send you (in so far as I have them) the lacking sheets.

I have read your brochures with satisfaction. There is much in them what is robust, but what good is it. Ten thousand armed men is worth more than being right. There are too many individuals who profit from injustice than that one can hope for good results

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*)Klaas Ris was a mill hand. In Idea 451 it was his budget that Multatuli publicised. And in a note to that Idea he praised K. R.'s booklet:"Is Holland's courage gin courage, then long live gin." Later on he often talked with Klaas Ris. This letter was never sent.

Concerning labor unions that play a big role in England, Belgium, Germany and France, I must confess to having no final judgment. I believe that the question has not been solved properly. My character sways me to take sides with the (so called) lower classes, but above such taking sides there should be truth. It is an establihed fact the workman does not get enough but.... in this the workingman is not alone. Perhaps you will think it strange that a minister too is too poorly paid. Those who in a land like ours walk off with the loot are the merchants and the speculators. Were I given the task to regulate the proportional pay, so that everyone in the establishment got their share in accordance with their services, I would quite stand abashed. Only this I know that many at present get too little, and the few too much. But recovery is more difficult than finding defects.

But even if I would not know how all should be regulated, still I can point out some things that are wrong. I maintain that Belief is a cancer. For centuries since intellect has been rocked asleep. The habit to accept what a black coat says got people used to indolence of spirit. That indolence reduced people to children, slaves, tools, and of that at all times misuse has been made by many who believe no more than I do, but who feign to believe so as not to lose the submission of others. There is a close tie between belief and poverty. It's self evident that one who expects something from heaven, must be content with his poverty on earth. Would you complain about the loss of a penny if you were certain of it that tomorrow (that is: after your death) you would receive a fortune? Of course not! Thusly believe breeds

acquiescence, indolence of spirit, submission, ignorance. And of that misuse is made by those who pretend to believe.

Cold and heat, however different, sometimes can have the same result, for instance the cracking of a glass. So too has unbelief, taking no part in the general acquiescence, the same result as does going along, believing. One is buried thusly under the pile of stones which needed to be cleared away. Still there have to be from time to time individuals who expose themselves to that danger, otherwise the road would remain blocked forever and ever.

When I said just now what good is it? I did not mean then that a well intended attempt never would bear fruit, but that it would not be realized in the lifetime of those who made it. Whoso is right is hated, that lies in human nature. He must first be removed, then people perhaps will pay attention to what he said.... yes, even statutes may be erected then! Any Jesus must be crucified before he ascends to heaven, and in that sense the Gospels contain truth. (Preachers have made a mess of the matter by turning it into an airhop.)

But let's return to Labor unions. I do not know whether they serve the purpose. Supposedly the goal is: to gain the power to obtain better income, either directly through a raise in wages, or inditectly through getting better food, shelter etc. for the same wage.

This now, to my believe, cannot be reached.

1º Higher wages. Wages do not entirely depend on the employers. They are a natural result of conditions. When there is a given amount of wood used in a country; when there are a given number of mills; a given amount

of capital; so much wind, so much this, so much that, the wages of the mill hand: so much. Suppose that an iron mine were discovered in Holland, so that people began to make things of iron that are now made of wood, then the wages in the iron industry would temporarily rise, and those of the mill hand go down. That would be so temporarily and to the time that this evened up again. Great poverty struck the workers in the pipe industry at Gouda, who were laid off after cigars came into such popular use. Goose-pen shapers, idem. Inland shippers, idem. Candle makers, idem. Wig makers, idem. After a while that flows even again but the workers whom it strikes are not helped thereby.

Now could a union of workers in the candle, goose-pen, pipe or wig industry have done anything in the way of coercing the employers to stay in business? No. The lowering of the wage or discharging (that is the complete stoppage of the wage) is a natural compulsion that is suffered by the employer as well as the employe.

An iron works must compete with other factories for a contract for a job, suppose £ 100,000. The factory employs 100 men. When those men receive f 8.- per week the employer is enabled to contract for the job, but if he had to pay f 1.- per week more, that would amount to f 5200.- in a year, he would not be able to get the contract. So he does not get it, the factory remains idle, workers are laid off and so get nothing. What would a labor union be able to do against this? Oh, if it were avarice, greed on the part of the employer, then I would say compel him by (in spite of Art. 415 W.v.S) striking the job, yes assail him, hang him. But not in a case when the employer can no more help it than the worker.

2°. Cheaper food, better housing etc., through uniting. *The wages would go down at the same rate as would food and housing*.

Assume that everything became 10% cheaper (you are of course right that this would not be enough by far, but assume it) then there would at once be workers who would hire out for 10% less, and the employers would feel themselves obliged to hire them, again in competition with others. The consumer would benefit, not the worker, nor the employer.

Workers must not assume that employers in general are their enemies. The hostility lies elsewhere, to which I shall return. An employer, a boss, a factory owner is for the establishment as well as for the workman, a useful person. He provides the possibility of work. You say, money has *preference* over labor and labor should come before money. See, a difference may be observed here. The money furnished for starting something may be: the fruit of labor, and in that instance is just as much to be valued as the workman is. Is not *your* money, what you receive each weekend not *your own work*? Would a loafer be entitled to call you a money hog when that money represents your labor of an entire week? That there are many who possess money without having performed labor for it, *is true*,, and they are the enemies of sociery, unless they spend their money well, that seldom happens. When, however, they do so, then again *that spending* is a labor that demands much thinking and exertion, and thusly not of the easiest kind. Possessing money with honor is not so lightly as it sees. Whoso does not possess, is of the opinion that he would find the right way, but let me assure you that it is difficult. An intelligent person who rightfully wants what is good, should eschew wealth. But I concede that the difficulties of poverty are greater.

3º The question if the power that might be created by labor unions, would be well managed? I believe with you that this would belong to the exceptions. And then the workers would lose to dishonest administrators what they had saved from their meager incomes or (temporarily, as in the long run this is impossible, viz Nº 1) had succeeded in getting it from their employers

4º. All meetings where each one has an equal right to talk, are idle. Everyone is exactly as much as no one. A collection of wisdoms is stupidity. Pulling into 20 directions at once causes a static. When a person directs his words to many persons, the possibility is that something takes root in the minds of the listeners. Perhaps he said something truthful here and there, or something that led to the road to truth. But soon as everyone carries with them the right to speak, that right becomes the main object. Listening is forgotten, thinking neglected, and soon such a meeting does not become an organization for the general good, but a dispute, babble and wrangle college, where talk is the main thing and usefulness is forgotten. This is the case among non-workers too. It's the disease of the age, and numerous things would be in better shape without that disease. All grand, good things came about through the efforts of one, not through an organization. No college discovered America, no parliament ever ascended to heaven, no meeting invented gun powder, or was blown skyward as van Speyk. An intelligent man always stands higher than the average of an association of different persons. Take paint. Paint can be green, red, yellow, as you like it. Mix all paints and in the end it's a useless color.

Association is the subterfuge of insignificant people who by seeking

others' support, attempt to appear to be something, and whoso indeed is something, is paralysed by that organization.

5º. Do you know many workers who indeed deserve a better lot? I guess not. Take note once how few there are who know their trade. (This is true among other classes too, an observation that is sad indeed, but we are now speaking of workers.) Does the incapacity of the majority entitle them to a better living? Most often not. And conceding this, will the exertion to improve themselves rise by adding to their present incompetence the desire to become talk and discourse machines? Is this the way to make of a bad shoemaker a good one, of an incapable smith a capable man? I do not believe it. I for one never have learned anything in a meeting, and I do not believe that others have.

More than once I had an opportunity to read discourses by workingmen. (Recently for instance at London, and this week at Koeln) and must tell you that it was slim pickings. A glassblower at London said that "he amounted to more than Lord Derby, the minister, since he knew glassblowing, and Lord Derby did not."

Well, I don't take the part of Lord Derby, whom I don't know, nor that of ministers in general. There are many duds among them. But I claim that this workman, granted that he can blow well, knows little more than blowing. Suppose that he is a master in his trade, and suppose the same of the minister, what is lighter, to blow a bottle or to rule an entire country in such a way that every one in peace can blow bottles or if need be drink out of them?

The poor man is almost quite as often wrong as is the rich man, yes perhaps more so. The sailor who has to be on deck in cold weather and discomfort, envies the captain who has it too easy in his cabin. Pray, why did the sailor not take care and become captain? In order to become that he had to exert himself, study, attain a certain conduct -is that sailor now entitled to demand reward for what he failed to choose to deliver?

Oh, there exist many injustices, a great many. But the (so called) lower class often makes unreasonable demands. They want to reap along with the others sans having sowed. Among the co-reapers there are many who did not sow. This is very injust, but that does not give another the right to insist on the same injustice. An injustice is not cured by spreading it, but by destroying it.

I said so called lower class. Well now, there is a lower class and you will agree with me. That class is not determined by dress, money, place of living or rank, but by the difference in mental development. It's the same difference that distinguishes man from beast. Now I ask you if you know many among the workers who, concerning their mental development do not belong to the lower class. But my dear man.... now follow two questions that I advise you to take into consideration:

1º. Why have you not long since applied yourself to scholastic ability, a trifle, such as the clothes that cover our nakedness, but that we cannot do without. Do not imitate me. I write differently from others out of disgust with pseudo-learnedness. To allow oneself

that exception one must have gone through what's usual. *You* I advise to make what's common your own, lest not your, mostly good, thoughts will be denied entry at the door as a poorly dressed beggar. Your *thinking* is too exact to dress up your ideas so carelessly. It takes away the value of much that is good and surrenders the appearance of superiority to others who either do not think, or badly so, but are master of the *form*.

2º. Why are you a mill hand? A strange question, you will say. Still I pose that question. And more yet: why do you get only *f* 6 per week? *This*, *it seems to me*, *should precisely be the point to which you should direct your thoughts*, not: how do we improve the lot of the workers? But, how do I improve *my* lot? (If each worker realized this, all workers would benefit.

See, the question is not: how do we make corporals or sergeants out of all soldiers. The question for each soldier is: how must I act in order to become a sergeant, or even officer! And that question, I think, you must pose to yourself. (My intention always was to assist you in that, but.... I have much adversity.)

The last question that I directed at you I pose to every workman who dreams of labor unions. You are slave, worker, tool.... correct! But.... show that you deserve better, by *being* something else, not by speaking about wanting to *become* something else.

From my window I see a livery stable. The employee (a slave, a tool, an oppressed worker!) sits there no, he lies. At week's end he no doubt

will complain that £5, £6, £7 (or how much does he get?) is not enough for his family. Admitted! But..... is it not enough for what work he does? For what good he brings about? For his exertion? Oh, ten times too much!

I ask you if this is not often the case? And if not many who complain have themselves to blame for their misrable condition?

"What then must I do?" that stable hand might ask. That I do not know! He should know that. And if he himself does not know it then some one else does not have to occupy himself with the improvement of the man's condition.

I said: "That not the employers or the bosses were the enemies of the workman, that there were other enemies."

Yes, those are not the job-supplying people, but all the cattle that in the Netherlands lives off interest, without doing any work themselves, or make it possible for others to work. That is a plague.

You are entitled to a share in the general prosperity. When you fall short in that (as I concede, except my remarks about higher wages) now, what you receive too little is not enjoyed by your employer, whose share is determined by competition) but by all those who directly or indirectly take their share without giving anything in return. Of those there are many in our country. And why is this so? Why is it tolerated? Because the people are droway, too lazy to think. How is it possible that for centuries certain people succeeded in making the masses so indolent? Through believing, through the sleeping potions of god worship.

That disease has to be exterminated. If in your youth you had been

told of things that exist, instead of the names of the kings of Israel, or the drunken man's tatle of Paul, or the insane language of John, if you had been told of the means offered by nature to better your lot; of a little common knowledge.... see, then I would doubt that now you would be a mill hand, getting f 6 a week.

I too need the second half of my life to rid myself of the nonsense pumped into me in the first half. I still suffer under it.

Well, my son and daughter are not hindered by that. They learn truth as much as that is possible from me. At this moment they are with my wife in Italy. I hope to see them again as soon as I can, here or halfway down, but alas, I seldom follow my wish, mostly only what I must. Life is a struggle, mostly when one does not float with the stream.

I would like very much to assist you a little, but... but.... it cannot. Later, when I'll be able, I'll do so.

With a friendly greeting,
Yours truly,
Douwes Dekker.

* * *

TO JULIUS DE GEYTER at Antwerp.

VII.

Koeln 8 february, 1867.

Dear Mr. de Geyter! It's really not my fault that I have given no other answer to your friendly letter of 20 january than that as yet I was unable to answer. I was wandering. Holland I cannot bear. I was in Coblenz an occupied myself with.... yes, with what? With thinking. I have to admit that in a certain sense I consider it a sickly business and have come to believe lately, since earlier I thought otherwise, that one does not think purely without doing some other work at the same time. What formerly I took for thinking seems to have been wandering now and then. Still, it seems that I was somewhat conscious of that when I encouraged myself and others to practise mathematics. But many physicians, or those who pretend to be such, themselves suffer with the disease which they pretend being able to cure. Be this as it may, I felt I had to work. But, as I wrote you recently, to work consistently, so that one's mind can go its way, requires a certain order, a certain stability in one's circumstances. Since my work exists, alas, in writing (I would rather makes shoes, as my writing hurts me) I wanted to be a little closer to the press and so go to Koeln. *

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*) Here follows a description of a condition which I have deleted since the reader already is familiar with it from earlier letters.

A brochure which I had already started in Coblenz (it was the difficulty of sending the press proves back and forth that drove me closer to the border) well, that little piece is ready, I've requested my publisher to send you a copy of it. But it's not of much consequence. In substance not much more than a phillip against Dutch decay, an old and boring theme. Yes, one might also call it a demonstration of how one from being sick of parliamentarianism becomes monarchist. Really, I am not in favor of kings! And even if I were, even then....*

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*) I'm duty bound to delete a few words here. MDDS.

But.... the most wretched king to my way of thinking stands higher than that fiegned republicanism that prevails in Holland. That call of: Hail the King with which I concluded my ½iece, realy is meant as: death to the rest. It's pis-aller.

I have asked van Helden to send a copy to the king. But first of all....*

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*)Here too I'm emphatically advaised to delete a few lines. MDDS.

Holland is not, as so often claimed: unripe, but unsuited for a representative system.

Being unripe, not yet being ripe, suggests the possibility of becoming ripe. That does not exist in North-Netherland. I am seeking for the cause and suppose to find it in the immorality of money making. Holland does not work, it speculates, it gambles. In 99/100 of the populace cannot share for lack of means. Those 99/100 stand behind the gambler as lackeys in the hall at Homburg, and wait with lackey-its submission for something to drop from the gain. This is humiliating. Labor (in another sense than the

gathering of of the cast about guilders) productive, creative labor would enoble, give voice and ability to join in judging. (I feel this within myself, how much more proud and bold I am when I work than when I am walking around day-dreaming.) In Holland each rich man is employer. (Oh, not in the roman sense no, in the common German sense: Herrschaft) every poor man is employee, servant, subordinate, client. And this latter again not in rom. sense, since the client was entitled to protection.

The ridiculous snobbiness of those who possess something, the despicable lowliness of the poor in Holland is the cause of the general degradation. It does not enter the mind of the poor man that he is entitled to more than the benevolence of his master, that is: of the man who hires him for a short while. The Dutch worker is not a citizen. A great crisis will be needed to change this. A mutually suffered shipwreck will bring the rich passengers and the poor sailors together. But will the new ship sail under the same flag? That is the question!

Through France's (or Napoleon's) timidity, through dis-unity of Germany, Prussia has become bold. It must go ahead, since a static is imp ossible. And when at last there comes a European disturbance, decayed Holland will go down with the first blow.

If it is for the benefit of humanity, I'll say amen. Still, I must admit that it would grieve me to see Germans in The Hague.

And now the matter with your Cercle! You ask if the administration can invite me directly? That kind of officiality is unnecessary. I just will accept your letter as such and say: yes. I will take care to be at Antwerp to hold a lecture there on the day determined by the Administration. I

only wish it to be as soon as possible. I do not lie dates set too far ahead, since it agitates me. Most desirable (and least poorly) I speak when least expected. Making, forming, I can not at all. Still, I fear that the pay is too high. Oh, that's not humility. Humble I am not. See, it might be that in a certain mood I would find thousands to be too little. So that is rather close to haughtiness, isn't it? But just as certain I do not think myself entitled three francs an evening if the spirit isn't there. I hope to draw encouragement from your letter (the only loveliness to become my part in a long time) and I shall speak, I hope, in accordance with that impression.

Thusly, dispose of the day of my arrival, I will act in accordance to what you agree to in my name. Avoid religion and politics? Yes, yes, I am well aware of that. I know those articles in the Rules and Regulations. The Free Masons too have such a rule! Oh, were it possible to touch on something sans simultaneously mentioning all! All is connected with all. All is in all!

But.... but.... a limping horse finishes last. I have no money and cannot ask van Helden for more. Is it convenient for you or the Cercle to send me fr.100? If so do so and count on it that I'll be there on the appointed day.

And yet another request, I hope you'll not think it too strange. I prefer very much to make no acquaintances besides you before I finish speaking. After that with pleasure!

But I much prefer to shut myself in for a few hours before I speak, otherwise it won't be good.

I will arrive in Antwerp with mixed emotions. I am thankful for the sympathy, but fear not to be a be to justify it. Yet I'll do my best.

Be greeted very sincerely from your loving

Douwes Dekker.

VIII.

Koeln 21 March 1867.

Dear de Geyter. I have to tell you 37000 things. First of all that I am jealous about your ink, that is black. I have paid 2 groschen, after that 2½ groschen and at last 7½ groschen to buy black ink and you see how it is. 2º. That you are wrong in addressing me "Dear Sir". If you do it again I'll return your letter. 3º. That it is lovely and good of you....*

5º. I'm in a scrape and need your help. Here's how.

So I receive
(The last two words are scratched. MDDS)
no good. I must make a new start. It's evident that one who is in a acrape must look for words.

The "libre pensée" invited me. I accepted for sunday and wrote, sans knowing how late, either saturday evening or sunday morning early I would arrive. that I would call at Mr. Straelen's sunday morning before eleven o'clock.

Upon this I received a friendly proposal to make it saturday as otherwise I'd be too tired (quite right) and "that those gentlmen

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*) Mr. de Geyter did not give me the original letters. Only copies. In this copy something has been left out, but mr. de Geyter writes that it is not important and in his judgment too flattering for the revipient of the letter. MDDS.

would take all possible car that I would pass the evening pleasantly."

In the meantime I had asked Mr. Breuer if I could stay with them. I remember having been invited by Mr. Flemmich, and had indeed accepted it, but was not quite aware whether I should consider that as lightly or seriously?

Now I receive a letter from mrs. Breuer in which H.E.D. quite lovely informs me that I cannot without rudeness pass up the invitation from Mr. Flemmich (en parenthèse such observations I like as a token of real sincerity, and I am thankful for them.)

Now I have decided to arrive at Antwerp saturday 5.40 p.m. and -from a real feeling of friendship, sincerity and appreciation- to cast all my difficulties on you.

Staying here, staying there, pass the evening with "libres penseurs", or at a concert, going to the right, to the left.... see I do with you as the believers with their god: He should know!

To the "Libre pensée" I have written that I want to be your "paquet", that I am your thing.

Is that all right?

The remaining 36994 points I shall deal with later, when I have good ink?

So you and your lovely wife receive kind greetings till saturday p.m., from your loving

Multatuli.

Be sure that I am en règle with mr. Flemmich, otherwise I'll take your life. I am as Jehovah, kind of heart, as you see.

IX.
Koeln, Tuesday.
(2 April 1867)

I'm ashaned for not writing yesterday. I was lazy. And I'm still lazy. Too lazy in fact to tell you sincerely how full is my being about the receptionthat was my part at Antwerp. I am unable to write today. Everything is whirling before my mind as soap bubles in the space of a wash basin. I shall give it a little time to gain some respite.

I hope to write you explicitely tonight.. Oh, I'm so sory that I didn't give your spouse, your lovely childlike spouse a kiss. . For that alone I would return to Antwerp -a real argonaut journey! The agreement with "la libre Pensee" I'll keep in mind. Yes, I hope to keep all in mind. I have gained many new perspectives at Antwerp, that is: learned a great deal, and perhaps that matter offers me a means to regain a fatherland. Exactly ten years I wandered, the same as Ulyssis; who knows if I have not found my Ithaca through my journey to Antwerp. Prof. Heremans is right: You people should annex Holland. The kern of Holland is within you.

And even your catholicism might be helpful, since....

Aye, I am unable to write today. Still, I have much to tell you. So later. Greetings to everyone, but in particular this sincere Breuer and his lovely, sturdy spouse.

I thank you for everything. Oh, 'twas too much!

Mult.

Will you remember to return to Ds.van Straaten his booklet, with

thanks, of course, for letting me read it. That parody is most witty. Will you send me the Lucifer? I am curious to read it entirely.

I assure you that in my impending writings it will be evident that I was in Antwerp, and learned a few things there.*

*) Between this letter and the following one the reader might insert in sequence of time the letters to H. Flemmich and his wife. They were written in German and French, and published complete with notes by Dr. Julius Pee in Netherlands Museum, 1894, at Gent.

X.

Koeln 11 May 1867.

Dear de Geyter. O be so kind to write me if there still may be expected something of the assistance on which you caused me to hope? My wife's condition, my own exhaustion, the necessity to, for once, to use my time for something else than that tormenting effort to stay alive, see, all of that forces me to ask you how the matter stands to which you so kindly referred? Will you tell me that? And, if possible with a little haste? For really, I'm in difficulties!

Sincere greetings to you and your lovely missus,

Yours
D. D.

XI.

Koeln, 14 June '67.

Dear de Geyter, I can assure you that I comprehended your silence, and I'm still sorry for not having long since freed you from the fear that I suspected you of insincerity. Our calling is to comprehend, and I have comprehended that you were disappointed and did not disappoint. I never would think of any insincerity on your part, rest assured of that! I know what it is to will and not be able, and it is a very natural

phenomenon of good hearts that they always are less able than they want to be. And this has to be so, since willing stands in the way of ability, and inability therefore is the inevitable result of good will.

'Tis so miserable, it's often said, he, he, or he might be of such help, if only he would.

Exactly! But"if he would," he would have yesterday too, and day before yesterday, and for years, and then he would be unable now. Since his "ability" is the fruit of never willing.

I have had very difficult days, weeks, yes months. In a certain sense I ma pleased with your writing: "Work I cannot," then you also comprehend (what many do not do) that in that mood I cannot work. And even yet, although sincea few days I have eaten.

Yes, I've even ordered some new clothes. What a joy daring to show oneself sans fear that the worn out shoes are visible. Work! See even sans any pressing care, I would need some time in order to recover from the emotion that the new shoes cause me. And I have given the old ones to be repaired, in that manner....

Oh, that bores me. Mr. F. has (and I guess that you are aware of it, and in spite of your own inconvenience have shared in it) sent me money. Well, I must acknowledge that the emotions at the time of its receipt, after a long silence from his side very unexpected, were not unmixed. But I write you this letter not for the purpose of painting everything with complete exactness. That would lead too far. Besides that would be a work, and working I cannot as yet. Also I have thanked mr. F. only for the present and will write him later.

Your letter dated the 9th has only been mailed on the 13th. If only now Mr. Rooses does not expect from the delay of my answer that I expect a formal invitation. O no. I am over and over s atisfied with the letter he sent you. So when I do not come to Gent, the cause for it must be sought elsewhere. I do not know, for instance, if I could counter the cost of the trip. When is it? As for Gent, and the Flemmings, I would be pleased to go there. Yes, even in a certain sense I'm interested in seeing a large assembly of North-Netherl. "men of literature" (hm! hm!) under one roof. That must be a remarkable show! But also for other reasons I am interested in the Gent congress, and to save you the trouble of the writing to and fro, I will ask Mr. Rooses for a program.

The ehlp from Mr. Flemmich and associates oprresses me somewhat or.... more than: somewhat. My wife is ailing. She left with the children for Italy since a lady friend of hers offered her asylum there. She had no choice. And see, the friend was so sincere, so sincere.... that the poor vagabond, in he 47th year, after much suffering, and in great need of some rest, had to start her apprenticeship as overseer in a boarding-school, where for a very slavish service of 14 hours a day paid with 40 francs a month. Of that 40 francs she pays 35 francs for room and feeding of our Nonni, whom she can keep with her on that condition. My little Max can stay with that friend. You realize how much I would like to free my wife from that boarding school and my little son from that woman. This I have wanted right along, but more than ever before the necessity to make and end to that condition is pressing as my wife, since the past 2, 3 months is dangerously ill, so that it's a question if she will

recover.

So the matter was urgent, and for that reason the delay of the Antwerp help made life so bitter for me: and for that too did I say at the time of the receipt of the help from mr. Flemmich, my emotions were not unmixed. I am now rescued from the hunger-death that was at the door, and now I hope to use the possibility of staying alive to rescue my wife (how, I do not know yet) but rescue as such there was not in the Antwerp help! And that I had hoped. (You realize that I write to you alone?)

That my wife yonder, instead of gaining a little rest, had to enter a burdensome and to her quite strange employment, to that extent is her own free will. That woman loved her so that her husband claimed he was neglected for her sake, and my wife would not be the cause of domestic trouble. This does not prevent me from thinking that this woman is a queer creature since she should have thought twice before accepting the responsibility of inducing my wife and children to come to Italy. I guess that her hospitality sprang from the desire to seem interesting. That happens more.

And now something else. Are you aware that you to me, because of me, and for me, have spent much money? Good man, it hurts me so.

I am longing to kiss your lovely missus and will do so as soon as I see her, whether or not you are present.

Dagh my good chap, my best wishes to you and her. I shall never forget how you have been for me. The entire hospitality that I experienced in Antwerp, I put to your credit forever.

Adieu.

Mult.

Might it be that there is talk of me"being unwell" that is so. I get

upset as I write of my situation and that of my wife. And yet I shall have to write about it when I answer mr. F. I must wait a few days. One does not have to be bed ridden to be unwell. I had such hopes to rescue my wife and failed. A bout that I am unwell.

TO C. BUSKEN HUET.

XII.

Koeln, 5 April.

Dear Mr. Huet. Just now I finished by brilliant Bulletin. Yes, it's more ponderous than I thought.... through the boredom. But still I keep on claiming that the pay is high in regard to the work, and the boredom cannot be taken into account while the editor can have no ahnung of it. Otherwise the entire Courant would be otherwise.

My second visit to Antwerp has, if possible, given me more satisfaction than the first. In the "Libre Pensée" I spoke on Mesmerism. Well, I believe I have written to you what I think about lectures in general, and mine in particular. I'm sick of it. It costs me no more, and I am ready to speak on the spot 2, 3, 4 hours long about what you will, but .... it's so so. "Mes vers ne me coûtent rien...." C'est bien heuruex, said some one else, etc. Now I should like very much to hear some one who speaks better. I fear, I fear that I would think the better, yes even the best, also bad. 'Tis impossible for one to give truth that is worthy of telling it, by the hour. When writing it sometimes costs me a sentence more.

But the good, generous Antwerpers were content. They treated me as a spolied child. I was overloaded with presents, kisses, embraces. They hung a watch on me, put cigars in my valise and sent tea after me and smoked meat. ... I am overcome with it. The heartiness lacks description,

and no doubt I must have made a foolish figure as a brahmin doll. They too always look so dumb. I cursed in order to change my serenity. Talked nonsense in order to protest against letter-sifting. I have embroidered a child's breast-frak.... nothing helped. Oef!

And I had warned against mesmerism. So you see what speeches amount to. Sound, sound, nothing but sound!

At the post office it is maintained that your letter was returned. Did you mail it from Haarlem? Then it must be there and not in Bloemendaal.

Prof. Scholten is a burden to me, and just because he is much too light. He cannot be contradicted except in the most banal manner. His bungling is so clumsy that he really deserves only a blow and is not worth a match. Still, I will deal with him. The cliff is that the ease is too great. I prefer finer work. But it flatters me that you commissioned it to me, otherwise I would have given him nothing but a little note, at the first opportunity a side swipe. Verily, he is below criticism and I am tempted to believe that your commission stems from haughtiness, as you personally count yourself too good for it. And in that you are right. Must that man tell his students who god is? By Jove!

I'm looking forward to your piece in The Nederland about "One thing and another."

For once do me a favor to give me an idea of what you have from me. The Loveletters? The Free Labor? The second printings? The Ideas as they have gone, that is two volumes?

I do not like reading, and I gues you don't either. But I cannot

believe that you place my later writings below Havelaar, and that's why I want to know what you have read.

My striving is to get my wife back and my children. But that is very difficult. Money is the main thing again. The children are well. Despite the bitterness for me to miss them, the idea comes to me that it is to their interest to grow up without the pressure that I (i nvoluntarily) would practise on them. Now they become better themselves. My wife is excellent for upbringing. Her system is: laisser aller. The children know no force, and the entire upbringing amounts to abstention. The only thing is that my little fellow is a a litle frivolous (D.speelsch; please watch what follows) If only you knew how those ch's bore me. Am I then the only one who dislikes them so? You may also take it for granted that I get goose-flesh at: The N. Rotterdammer does observe etc. Correct it it, yes! Correct as in the past: I hatede, you hatedet,.... Well, I always hatede such correctness.

But.... in order to be just I must bring up in compensation all the goose flesh that I so often cause you and many others, by my indiscipline.

Indiscipline? Look how many commas I put into my little bulletins. 'Tis in order to se pàmer d'aise for the Haarlemmer.

Are you, just as I, sick of the 2nd Chamber, and the daily papers? What rubbish! And how uncouth is this Fransen van de Putte! "How does that little bite taste?" fidonc. No doubt he would think it strange about him being uncouth, I, who so often am rude. There is a difference, i know at least three latin proverbs about that with licet and non licet,

but my page is full. Is your missus well and your little boy? How is he? Greetings to her and him, and believe me sincerely yours,

D.D.

At Antwerp I was taken to the Kinderdyk during a festival. There too the reception was so genuine that it astonished me. Mais le moindre grain de mil" etc. But "mil" may still come.

XIII.

Koeln 9 April '67/

My dear mr. Huet, Just now I received at last your letter of 2 March, pinned to this piece of paper.*

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*)This letter is written on the unused space of a Koeln p.o. message. MDDS.

The submitted explanation is no explanation but I cannot be angry as after all it's evident that they have exerted themselves. And no matter how old your letter be, I am pleased with it. And that's why I write at once.

That you take such notice of "One thing and another" pleases me, and that impression would remain even if you had so many more faults to censure than its diffuseness. As that is so. I would make the same the same observation (but there are two answers to it) if I had to review such a thing.

What business do Huygens, Briseis and Huig de Groot have with a Javanese banjir? This I myself ask in "Show me the place", and such questions you might pose repeatedly.

One rebuttal is -o my so bitter- that sometimes I must give free rein to my fancy because there is a need of sheets of print.

And the second, not so sad and at the same time the cause that made me swallow the bitterness of the first is: that this fault may be essential. Concise truth draws no attention.

A playwright knows, or should know, that the six, eight sentences after the raising of the curtain are lost among the scuffling and noise. Thusly it is cogent that he institutes his piece in such a way that those phrases can be spared without damage to the context. Preachers too did so in my youth. The intonation considered it beneath itself to compete with foot-stove attendants.

Now I believe that I should apply this on all writing somewhat, and not only at the start, but in the course of the piece.*

The comparison with dramas and opening-prayers is wrong in so far as I desire to be well comprehended in my deviations as I would seem to be in need of them,they,her (how grammar bores me!) for the sometimes epigrammatical conclusions. A whale dies not from one harpoon shot, but still such harpoon shots have to be made to haul him in at last.

Good heavens, it seems that my system is faulty on that point, as I haven't caught many whales yet.

And besides, it's not a system. I would not have thought of it but for your observation (which I think is basic) and now I search for causes of that error. I really prefer to write staccato.

Oh, how I admire your word "schrander" (sagacious). And I believe that this is merited, but also that each reader would be just as sagacious if they could become accustomed to will comprehending. The habit is to dread the effort that it might require! Since wrongly

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*)This paragraph is discontinued and it has a scratch through it. MDDS.

comprehending is easier than correctly grasping perhaps?

Well, deviating from that no doubt will be sagaciousness, and that's why I like your qualification. The entire matter comes down to: desire to grasp = philosophy, doesn't it?

That you say being stiff I do not think stiff. But you are right in your demand to be taken for what you are, and I find it already a great deal that you tolerate my loseness.

At this moment my purpose is to rescue my wife. Alas, can the review of Scholten's brochure be so concise just when I did not have "reams of print" to deliver?

But even if I wrote ten times as voluminous (that soon would bore me) it still would not make me succeed to write the necessary money together. I am brooding on other means. It must be possible, as my wife suffers. If it did not nauseate me to become more popular than I am already, I would for once write the history of my family during the last two, three years. How "lovely" would that book be.

I shall pay no more attention to your sparsely or none answering my long letters. I will take it for granted. But do not think that it is an ugly knack of mine to write much or long. I write seldom, and even then little. Thusly my long letters to you are a distinction. You could not know that. I am convinced that of ten people who think they are entitled to hear something from me, 9.75 complain that I do not write.

Do you read to your wife on sundays? In Antwerp I have recited in domestic circle and well. I wished I could do that for pay, but in little halls, as when I have to talk to loud, it's miserable. I am

certain that my writing is worth more than my speeches.

Do not forget that I still do not have Nederland (or that part of it). Sincere greetings to you and your spouse.

t. a. v.

Douwes Dekker.

I am still looking for money to start my own paper. That would be a relief!*

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*) It's a pity indeed that in the letters from Busken Huet that were saved, there is a hiatus from 9 janurary to 23 december 1867. MDDS.

XIV.

Koeln, 23 April.

Dear Mr. Huet, Just now I received a letter from my wife that makes me fear the worst. She writes that there is no danger, but the entire letter is so that it terribly upsets me. The doctor has stopped her from further employment.

What I must do now I do not know. But I might try to raise money in Antwerp for a trip to Milan. I do not know.

Be this as it may, I have nothing. I did not receive the f25 for March-April. Will you send them to me?

Adieu, t. a. v.
Douwes Dekker.

XV.

Koeln, 31 May, 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet. That I did not reply sooner to your kind sending of your article about ten Kate's creation, was really not because of lack of

interest. The cause lies in my mood, which is very low. Just because I was pleased with your examination, I wanted to review it in detail and for that I waited for a little more brightness than my condition leaves me. Well, that does not change. On the contrary!. And should I wait for rescue from the fatal agony in which I spend my days and nights, the chance would be that I never thanked you. That I do not want.

I have read your review "with satisfaction". I need that cliche just in order to tell the truth. No one can applaud your piece more heartily than I, since I hate false poets more than all other knaves. That "all other" is no exaggeration. Even you say: "the poet ten Kate still has to become an honest man." I, more rude, draw a line through the word poet and deny the delinquent the benefit of an extenuating predicate.

Since poeticness is humaneness, and I consider it a naughty prudence to leave the door ajar for a conception as if your verdict concerns the verses only.

"The female Lais, Aspasia, Phryne.... as ever still has to become an honest human being?" Aye.... may the quite too large receptivity of those ladies be separated from their being human? Of course not. And does not poeticalness exist in a similar receptivity just as inherent in human nature as womanhood?

I know, alas, from experience how low the soul's barometer must sink in order to sell feeling, stress, inspiration on command or....because of need. But need -worry for wife and children above all- might serve as an extenuating circumstance. One who can do so out of lust,for wealth, from pleasure in lying, I call bad, tout court.

Yes, your article is very beautiful. To me 'tis a real literary study. The argumentation that Pythia is not stunned, but only feigns to be, is as logical as can be. (page 19, for instance, and that referring to Paul de Kock's motto of Horace. Would anyone risk engaging your reasonings? I guess not. How do all the people get along who, reading you, say: "lovely! exactly" and go on thinking the Amsterdam Stock Exchange so beautiful? That I do not grasp. But more and more I grasp the longer the less our entire establishment. My entire intelligence consists of non-grasping.

That just I so wholeheartedly agree with your unmasking of ten Kate's deceit is because I count his manner among the most dangerous of lies. I never can read such things sans thinking of "of sinning against the H. G." That will not be forgiven it is stated.

That there are beautiful verses in his works (yes, the one you quote on your pages 12, 13, I think sublime) what does that prove? That the entire poetastery is a knack, a cleverness. The Japanese let a pegtop move on a tightrope; in Egypt I saw a gost stand on 6, 8, 10 phalanges laid on top of each other; we have had the O-tale, the A-speech, the E-legend, and preaching sans R, and what not? And some of those tours de force I place, as to difficulty of execution (yes sometimes too in utility) equal to, or above the trick of verse making. You and I can do that too. The question remains if we would succeed so well in reading a rebus in the Illustrated?

Be this so, ten Kate knows the trick, even though I do not agree that the rhytmus never fails him. Or am I to blame when I ask (your

page 32): who has spoken of humming or translating psalms as being contrary to composing? (It states: "psalm composer.") What wretch has deprived poor mankind of their laws? ("lawgiver")

Is furthermore the caesura not ugly in:

of earth and hea/ven Human/....
of which the Mos/t id too/....

Is there not a struggle between scansion and inevitable manifestation in:
Lord's Messenger and Confidant?

But that is secondary. As I must acknowledge that for the rest.... oh, well considered, is not the entire prosody a convention. But then so much flatter too becomes verse making.

Still I have an observation that concerns the trade. Once for all we know that the cleverness often is in finding a well sounding end strophe. All that's needed then is to prepare for the line (or more precisely to make it telle quelle possible) one just has to swallow, the same as the flat "couplets" in a german vaudeville. Six lines of senseless filling lead along a thorny path to the end word of line seven, upon which the stichwort must rhyme. Et d'applauder!

The last two lines (your) page 31 are gelungen!*

*)Huet had quoted here from ten Cate's "Storm from the wilderness") MDDS.

.... God zy lof! Weer blinkt hy!
Hy gloeit; hy bliksemt waar hy gaat;
Een stroom van hemelsch vuur, een Noorderlicht, omringt hy
De nachtkim met een dageraad!
Da Costa! laatste zoon van 't Koninklyk Geslachte,
Dat Holland Dichter heeft gekroond!
Zie, U omzweeft zy nog, de onsterfelyke Gedachte
Die eens aan d'Amstel heeft gewoond!
Op U slaan we allen 't oog, van heilverwachting zwanger,
Uit wanklank, zwakte en schemering!
God gaf de Liefde U, Mensch!..... God U 't Genie, o Zanger!....
God U 't Geloof, o Christen!.... zing!)

(O yes. 'Tis an imitation of Lamartine's epitaph to Mme. Malibran: beaute, virtu, genie.*

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*) The singer's grave is located at Laeken near Brussels. MDDS.

But the filling? Is that from a good craftsman? I say no. 'Tis a conglamoration of phrases. What labor in order to get to "zwanger" and "schemering" as a preparation for "zanger" and "zing". Has Holland been crowned, or has it crowned? Has an entire generation been crowned? Composer crowned? And (even if one now absolutely wishes to bring on something to rhyme with "zanger", can an eye be "zwanger". (D. = pregnant.) Is that not an unheard of phenomenon in ophtalmia? Is the coupling of"dissonance, weakness and twilight" as a description of place or condition "from which" one casts that "pregnant" eye, not a little pregnant of conception confusion?

How Bilderdyk got rénommée, again is one of those many things I fail to grasp. Even in accordance with the most ordinary rule, I find his verses bad. Once again turn to (your) page 43....*

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*)(Probably in the first issue of Huet's "J. J. L. ten Kate and his 'Creation' there was a quotation from Bilderdyk to which this paragraph refers. In the issue of 1878 that lies before me, I've looked for it in vain. MDDS,)

the stop gap: "see", then"that audacious trying" (a most ordinary saw, further on line 3: ...,stig 't iets m..." and... "ns... ns...ds...st."

And then that "fastening" of the madness. Would not a proper muzzle suffice?

But school he has made. And how! Da Costa strives aside and past him in jaw-fatigueing cacophony:

> "Heil het lam dat vermocht heeft
> Dat ons met zyn bloed gekocht heeft
> Dat verlossingen gewrocht heeft....."

Isn't that a little hard, and for a lamb besides?

I guess that you judge Bilderdyk and Da Costa otherwise than I do, if not then you would, I think, when pronouncing their names, not have been able to avoid giving them a little whiplash. Well, then I await Belehrung.

Your article probably will not be comprehended again, or its acclaim will be delayed until that becomes "du jour". It will be said in 1900 plus: How that Huet castigated false poesy.... But at the same time they will burn incense on overstrainings of other false gods and slander the people who declaim against it. Psychology is a sad study.*

Today is your little son's birthday and tomorrow he's starting school. I am so reminded of it because my little Nonnie will have a birthday too. I have not seen her in over two years and doubt that I'll ever see her again as I am in very difficult circumstances. This makes me despondent. That I wrote you a rather long letter was because I am so partial with your striving to unmask untruth. If there were a little desire for truth I would not have lost my family, and there would be work for me. Now there is nothing to do for me. Oh, that I might send in to your Courant. That doesn't cost soul.

The best of wishes to you and your spouse and a kiss for your little man. My heart breaks when I think of children, and still I cannot avoid doing so. Yesterday at the station there was a girl who met her father.

Your loving,
D.D.

Why I was given such false hope at Antwerp puzzles me. I hear nothing from there.

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*) (Concerning Huet's review of Ten Cate's "Creation" viz: Idea 733.

xvi.

Koeln, 21 June 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet, Thanks for your lovely letter and the f25. Yes, the Ombomiers are in Brussels, or have already left. They have paid me a visit and not improved my mood. It's hard for me that I must receive tiding from my family through others -strangers, since that they are to me. Besides, I take it ill of mad. Omboni that she, perhaps meaning well, but... however it be, my wife and children are farther from me than ever. And the chance to get them back becomes slimmer and slimmer. My condition is painful beyond description.

Should any one ask what I am doing? I suffer. Voilà.

In order to bring about a change in the unnatural separation from my family through working, I should have to find different employment than giving ideas and opinions to Nederl. readers. From experience I know that Juvenalis was right with his "indignatio" as inspirer, but Juvenalis might have added that indignation is subject to expansion and become loathing. Then it throttles expression; it causes muteness.

Reading excerpts from what members talk about in the second chamber makes me vomit. You who (vous deuxième, because I heard that prof. van Vloten mentioned me lately) you who had the courage to be right and bring up Havelaar in connection with the increase in remuneration of the native cheifs....*

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*)(In a note to "On Multatuli by Busken Huet, in context with "One Thing and Another about Prussia and The Netherlands," Huet wrote: "In another memoir of explanation, of a very recent date, and issued by a minister of the opposition, the justice of the increase in remuneration of the native chiefs in Java is acknowledged by the

government. That Multatuli in recent years was punished because he realized the justice of it too early, this is evident. The wise one arrives in this world at the proper time. Nonetheless, the healthy instinct of the vast public would think it only fair if the budget that carries the native chieftains' remuneration, had been enhanced by a national reward for the man through whose efforts they would have it better in future, the Javanese less exploited, and the Dutch reputation honored profusely.") MDDS.

You will realize how tensely I watched during the discussions about the matter for a citation, a phrase, a word, a hint from which it was evident that I was being remembered. Nothing! It must have cost exertion, I imagine. For a moment it occurred to me to write to the minister, to the chamber, to the people.... but ah, but ah, I have already written so much, I'm nauseated.

This remains certain, that in the entire 2nd Chamber there sits not one honest man. Since the evasion of the only true priority cannot be an accident. I am entitled to suppose that my history is known, and then it's also known that the exploitation of the native begins with abuse, law violation, criminally peeking through the fingers, and not from the laws and regulations themselves. Of that I gave sharp sounding signals. Whoso claims not having heard those signals, not comprehended, not grasped, tells lies. Can it be accidental that no one in the Chamber got the idea to ask: if from now on the regulations would be maintained? By what means that would happen? Or that the regional governors would be supported in doing justice?

And all law making sans this is vain. From time immemorial beautiful regulations are stated in the Record of the Indies and if properly maintained the Kultuur Systeem would not be

at all bad. All that for which the system is blamed comes from the deviation of that system. Van den Bosch prescribed expressly to protect the little man; to listen to his complaints.

The raise in remuneration of the chiefs is, in view of its purpoese, ridiculous. They can't afford to accept it. But even if there were a proportion between compensation for stopping extortion, and what the chiefs would have to give up for it, who will control the so cheaply bought integrity? The officials. Yes, they! It's stated in their instructions. It was stated in my instructions too. I did it and suffer penury. It's very encouraging. It would take a big hero to follow my example.

Not a single honest man in the chamber. Poh, I might, concerning some, speak more definitely, and even remove the guess that I made a distinction between political and other integrity (which I don't) by, for instance, calling van der Hucht, very personally, a scoundrel, but this is not essential. The political falseness quite suffices me. Can it be accidental, carelessness, slovenliness that Stieltjes, who declared in one of his articles, before he became a member of the Chamber, that I had judged the question of free labor quite right, did not mention me during the discussions of those matters? With so much opposition, with so much confusion of concepts it certainly was worth while, I think, to point to a book that had shed light on the (would be) question. (I think that his terms are: "that after my explanation regarding it, there could no longer be any doubt nor disagreement about it," or something like that. Sloet too, wrote

wrote privately that I had told the truth.)

Can that silence be accidental? And is it not to make one become bitter then? Now that would be nothing, provided this bitterness caused a desire and strength for battle, but I am past that bitterness, nauseated, partant: incapable. I woul d be capable of nothing but revile. And I had always been gentle.

No, no, your (quite superlative) defense of the manner in which you crticize is not sophistic, really. Don't change anything, for heaven's sake. You could not do so anyhow. Reading your verdicts I continually think: how is that absorbed? I imagine all manner of readers and have no conception of the impression. Since either they grasp it, and then there will have to be a good many altars overturned or, they fail to grasp it and then they must consider you to be a monster to whom nothing is sacred. But that dilemma of: either-or is useless. Many, the majority, yes perhaps all, save themselves the choice between grasping and not grasping and run over it. At Amboina (in many respects a very interesting region) lived an ancient, very oldfangled Dutch merchant marine captain. Once some one asked him: Well, captain, what you say about Ambon?

"Hm.... yes.... so.... what shall I tell you.... 'Tis an island. (Literally)

Now so will it go with your review too. Well, what you say of that article by Huet?

"Hm.... yes.... so.... 'Tis s review."

And for such people Ambon displayed its sublime bay, its clove gardens, its interesting population, its sago palms, its memories of the "noble" East Indies Company. --And you your beautical articles. It's really saddening.

I cannot get clear on the v. Vloten matter. When I first read something about it (in the haarl.) I wrote him immediately. I felt an urge to get involved in it. And he sent me his "Honest People". Well, I did not care for it. However this would not*

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*)(the rest is missing. But in context with the subject that is discontinued here, I follow up with the next letter. MDDS,)

To Dr. J. van Vloten.

XVII.

Koeln 23 March '67.

Dear mr. van Vloten. I see in the Haarlemmer that you are busy, or rather that your opposition is growing more serious. May I ask you kindly to send me the documents of the process? I am quite certain that you do not need my help, but I feel the need of being involved. Don't say: non tali auxilio, etc. Supporters' silence makes the opposition seem stronger than it really is, and that is ruinous since many wait for the vorming of a"respectable minority" before they risk to declare themselves. I will try to bring a voice alive. Then it will become evident that in no wise we are"eccentric."The time is at hand that we run the danger of being the opposite. Protesting will become commonplace. But in the

believers act as if we are lonely fools that one can upset with one's little finger. Come on, send me your "Honest People" or whatever your piece is called of which I recently saw a second printing announced. Is that the address about which Curators and Council are so upset? Do you have money.... oh, it's not essential, you are able to teach, you Doctor. That can no one take from you.

Tonight I will leave for Antwerp in order to speak there tomorrow in the "Libre pensée". I was there two weeks ago, and very well received.

Will you give my best wishes to Mrs. van Vloten. And Willem and Odo, the other names I do not recall but remember them to be lovely youngsters.

Quite yours,
Douwes Dekker.

Yes, really and truly the belief habit must be exterminated, root and branch as well as that other cattle disease.

Do not think that I will involve myself in your quest rashly and sans tact. It might be that I would not talk about that in particular. But I must be aware of it. Mostly is this essential since Mr. Huet recently sent me "Scholten's supernationalism in context with bible christendom and protestantism," to look over (and in a certain sense review). A nauseating thing. Well, it's good that I am posted, if only to mention cursorily your boldness in contrast to Scholten's rubbish.

I think I shall talk at Gent too. Since there is talk of inviting me there.

Sincere greetings.

To Mister Busken Huet.

XVIII.

Koeln 26 July 1867.

Dear Mister Huet, As early as yesterday I received the f25, for which I thank you.

Whether I know Hasselman? Not personally, but somewhat by hearsay. He is a very well behaved man and never committed, I believe, any mischief. At least I never heard of it. Besides he is, no doubt, free from liquor, enjoys full citizen's privileges. Briefly, he answers all the qualities that the Netherlands seem to demand for bringing order to the confused colonial situation. The observation recently uttered by Keuchenius, be it old, is not wrong that in fact there is more required to be a clerk or supernumerary than to become a minister.

That just now I said confused situation, is as a manner of speech. The matter is very simple provided there were a genuine desire for what's good. If I were to write an article about Indies' conditions, I really would not know how to avoid your suggestion of not going into too much detail, since I realize that then my demonstrations and conclusions would be disdained because of their simplicity. The entire matter is so: doing justice is out, and so is calling a spade a spade. There is no question about Free Labor or Kultuur System. I never met an Indish man with whom I would speak about that for a quarter of an hour, who did not agree with that. Disputing about systems is the usual dodge of every one who wants to side step a verdict about the facts.

Writing about Indies' matters? I am dejected. Besides, I have difficulty seeing. My eyes are bad. I might be able to write, but correcting, no. And even were this not so.... what's the use? I am silenced to death.

There might be only one way possble to put an end to the very precarious condition in which the Indies are. But for that I should be able to assert myself constantly. Once for all this is not so.

Oh, a daily paper! My own paper In which I would daily distill the drop that bores a hole in a stone.

I received an invitation from the Gent Congress. (You have too, no doubt, and if not, then I do not know what those Gent people call Literary knowledge.) Sapistri, I would like to see you become a professor so much! I imagine that you would produce a new race in 10, 12, 20 years. And even if you could not infuse a creating spirit, much would be gained if a dislike had been obtained from the former twaddling.

Well, I accepted on condition that I was supplied with money for the trip. This they have made possible by offering me a conférence. And that will now happen. And I will also speak at the Congress itself. I had requested to be spared that, but on their assurance that "everybody" wanted it, I promised to deliver something.. Also it was desirable, they wrote, that the subject were known, in order to complete the program. I submitted:"Concerning a proper measure of freedom in the use of unusual wordshaping and phrase turning."

Well, if that word phrase-turning does not charm them, I'll declare myself sly.

But what I'll say about it I'm not quite right. Among ourselves I fear that I might be in a bad humor at that Congress and hope to guard myself against it, anger being mauvais genre, that I know. But to see so many Dutch literary people together....

Imagine, there will, I hear, also attend the gentleman who wrote in de Nederland: "the snuffbox," about which you exclaimed: great gods, what literature!

My wife manages. If only I could bring her and the children back. My son's letters are curieux. I realize that a closer watch is required to force him into a little training in what's usual. He bothers with astronomy, botany.... que sais je, but still cannot spell properly. My grieving about that are the death of me yet.

Best wishes to you and your wife and Gideon. Vacation! Oh, that I might get a vacation from fruitless pondering.

With love,

Douwes Dekker.

XIX.

Koeln, 2 August.

Dear Mr. Huet.*

Together with your letter I received two from Gent. One from mr. Rolin-Jaquemyns, and one from the secretary of the Crombrugghe Association, both about the conférence I will hold about I don't

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*)(Deleted from the beginning of this letter is a "little about the little bulletins. MDDS.)

know what.

Those gentlemen write very much -how do you call it- in admiration. So also did Mr. Roses, secretary of the Congress. Well now it's not for that why I allowed myself to be moved to take part in that business. I am not a literary man, I do not like "speaking" on order, I do not believe in the utility of such things and, before all.... I am shy.

The reason that forced me to accept the proposals lies in the faint hope that perhaps in Gent or elsewhere in Belgium I shall find something that could enable me to let my family come. A very small steady income might make me decide to that. The hope is indeed feint, but it might be real.

It seems you are very busy and I can see how you dislike all scribbling. Recently I read in an old chronicle about a couple of knights who could not read. It made me jealous.

Well, for that reason I shall spare you a long letter. Once more sincere thanks for yours.

Sincere greetings to you and your wife, from

t. a. v.
Douwes Dekker.

Would it be considered a breach of etiquette if I requested you to send me the honorarium due 15 July-August a little earlier than usual? I need the money for my trip, starting the 18th.

XX.

Koeln, 14 Aug. 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet. Thanks so much for the quick remittance of the £25. I am very much in your debt for not delaying till the 16th or 17th, as

I then would have been in a scrape, doubting whether it would come. My trip depended on it.

As usual I take the trip much to heart. No, now more than usual, as I am not well. I would not have accepted the invitation if not the (very feint) hope were connected with it of finding something in Ghent that would enable meto let my family come. The chance is slim, that I know, but soit! After all, it's a chance.

Yes, many subjects. There are some that might require a separate Congress. What subject from Kern do you think so lovely? That about the Franks, or the one about the cumbersome addresses?

Last night I received a copy of the Nederland article by Dr. A. van Staden, in which, among others, poor de Geyter of Antwerp is battered because he flies so high, or rather because he looks down so on Bilderdyk, Beets and van Lennep. Comical! Both de Geyter and van Staden would get the wind in the face from me, should it come about that I got involved in such a contest. This is certain, that I do not write well enough to make people grasp what I would like to see so much being grasped, and after much protest in the spirit of the parables of Chresos, Mr. Dimanche and the bewildered mother. I think it grievous still having to notice that people are occupied with inquiring into the questions: whether Cresos plays delightfully, whether Dimanche writes a good hand and whether the mother screams well.

Besides my physical fatigue, the realization of the fruitlessness of my writing is one of the main reasons for my impotency. A quoi bon? rustles in my ear with every letter, and down comes my pen.

Impressions from the Congress? Heavens no! I'll be glad if I finish

a fiasco. I do not feel the slightest vanity, and that is a bad sign. I have always thought so, and this feeling became paradox. But see, it has become dox. Dr. Aloysius van Gonz....(that comes from Koeln with all his saints) Dr. Aloysius van Straden in his demonstration of Bilderdyk's excellence alleges that the latter does not budge an inch with Mult. in personal (sic) culture of original genius." Mark that this is a number on the list of things in which B. ranks high. My guess is that Dr. Aloysius has intended this as répoussoir, but it's not so stated.

And then the personality of that culture! Imagine B. and I by procuration lying on our knees before our portraits! Put out to contract of self idolization.... there is depth in that idea of Dr. Alexius! The man will go far since he knows how to admire something in everybody. Van den Bergh is a "fiery patriotic poet." So if we get annexed then van den Bergh will lose his topic and so flambé. Rare kind of poets who only deal in one matter. But.... just as in your ending of the review of Klaasje Zevenster, for Holland they are good enough!

Besides the many other reasons that cause me to object to the Ghent Congress, I also feel hindered by the fear that I might be arrested. I have debts in Brussels and the possibility is that a "prise de corpse" will be obtained against me. Things like that do not encourage.

When I so confide one thing and another of my tribulations (and it's not all) I do this in a sense of justifying my idleness.

With greetings also to your wife,

Yours truly
Douwes Dekker.

XXI.

Koeln, 24 August....i
say the Flemings.

Dear Mr. Huet. Last night I returned all tired out from the Congress. My ears buzz. An overdose of impressions intoxicates me. My soul has overladen my stomach. You have asked me for "Impressions from the congress"! 'Twill be difficult or impossible. I fear risking being untruthful. But not only because of the multitude of matter I "enjoyed" (mark you that of late I deal in germanisms and that the german enjoys everything that he "innehmt", even were it arsenic.) so not only for the surfeit, but also because I have experienced so many personal emotions that make me too much of a patient to enable me to describe the disease. Since such a congress marks a disease.

And yet another reason withholds me from sketching my impressions. Les congrès.... ce congrès n'était pas ce qu'un vain peuple pense. I claim that the enthusiasm, the noise, the word-peddling (and heaven knows there was no scarcity of that) this time had a very political tint. A little while longer fermenting, and a tiny friendly found cause from abroad.... and the Flemish provinces will burst into full flame. If I could talk to you (but not today as I am hoarse) I would tell you much and divide my speech into three parts: 1º My personal encounters. Rather curious, and you will get some of it later. 2º Literature. That doesn't interest me. I believe it was miserable. What was sublime (creations from Vreede, Moltzer, A. S. Kok) was read and could have entered the world in print. The rest....aye. Besides, often I ran off

in order to talk with the door man and the policeman at the gate, and so am really not entitled to join in the talk about what happened inside. 3º The Flemish movement! It's important that I assure you. Get ready to hear some news. Pretty soon people in Zutphen, yes in Leeuwarden will speak of our Rubens, and in Antwerpof our de Ruyter. All that is lacking is that they say: our van Speyk!

The central part of my speech I would only touch on to say that I know little about it. Nº 1 I cannot speak about because it's too personal, and of Nº 3 I would not publicize too much because I will not talk out of school and spoil a matter that may have a future and perhaps give me a fatherland. Something of which one now and then feels a need, were it for the children only.

I have made difficult trips. The heat was unbearable. And even in Ghent I was from mornings 10, 11 o'clock to late in the afternoon constantly wet with sweat, and afterwards until 2, 3 at night, chilly, cold. I think that everybody was affected that way. Now I am hoarse, chilly and shivery. Is that a word? I t should be.

Oh, oh, think what new acquaintance pleased me the most? You'll never guess! I am purely in love with Dr. te Winkel. That man is so endearing, I think, and I liked to talk with him so much that because of that acquaintance alone I don't fret about my trip with inclusion of the less pleasing contacts, even the avanien done me. Of them, you'll probably hear. But now, and even before my departure from Ghent, matters became so comically twisted that I made up my mind never again to take a historian in hand. Look, if one day and 50 paces distance from an

incident produce so much untruth, to how much untruth comes 10, 20, 1000 miles X a couple of centuries?

Prof. de Vries (whom I learned to know with pleasure and who is a more congenial man than one would get to think from van Vloten's caricature) can exactly tell you how the incident with Prof. Vreede came about.

This evening I shall try to erase my arrears with the Haarlemmer. I haven't slept off yet my intoxication. Often I've heard it said by professionals in drinking:"one has to stick to one wine, and that one only gets drunk by drinking everything mixed." Well then, at Ghent I have everything "eingenommen". Malaga, sweet as sugar; champagne beraushend exciting. Water and milk, flat. And in between all of that vinegar and.... wormwood. Yes, I was all in. And the result: I suffered a good deal.

Greetings with love, from yours truly,
Douwes Dekker.

I claim that no one but prof. de Vries, can tell so well of the incident with Vreede. Others saw and heard only what happened. He saw it coming, warned by me as, oh heavens, I wanted to protect Vreede! The good it did me, as Pieter Spa his voayage to England.

(Between ourselves, the Belgian state is condemned, I consider what was set up in '31 as not viable.)

……

TO MISTER MAX ROOSES.
(Secretary of the organizing commission of the
IXth Dutch language and literary congress at Ghent.)

XXII.

Koeln, 5 July 1867.

Very esteemed sir!

Thanking you for your esteemed letter of 22 June....

There you have it! During forty long years I wrote: juny. Why? What's the function of that tail? Well, we need to cut off those needless tails but involuntarily they grow on again since.... we have attended school, and at that school lost our tongue and so literary artificiality has become our second nature that often we think we are extravagant when we return to simplicity. This parenthesis we owe (or can blame) to an idea offered itself to me between line 2 and 3 of this letter in order to meet your question "about what would I speak at the Congress?" with the reply: "About lies in spelling." Or something like that. But I do not answer that as, praythee: is it quite necessary that I now, beginning Juli declare what subject will somewhat animate me on 19, 20, 21 august? That I do not know and I admire the folks who do know it. If necessary, I will submit the subject but.... rather not. And besides, is it necessary that I speak over all? Why? There will be wisdom enough for sale and I continually think of the fitting word of prof. Heremans at the international Congress for social sciences:"'Tis a caroussel of words here." Once more, is it absolutely necessary that I as early as this give my name as a speaker?

It certainly would make a difference if I, on the spot, felt aroused to contradict or enlighten. That I anticipate, and in that instance silence would be difficult for me. I shall feel glow when among writers of dictionaries I hear the idiom, that is all the people treated as being dependent on a e or an o more or less, or dying or living with ch! Yes, it's then that I become sad, since not in such miserable, quite arbitrary pedantry lies the interest of our soul's trumpet. I have a higher conception of the word language, and feel myself humiliated and hurt to be, in that sense, a full or half colleague of "literary people". With that it is as with morality. Virtues are invented and practised (mostly negative by abstention from something damaging) in order to do sans virtue, that is to be positively active good. I have said it already elsewhere, Cicero did not know what Vossisus meant by *ablativus absolutus*, but he thundered well sans Vossius. I think beyond doubt that the instructions given to the cherubim who drove Adam out of paradise contained some grammatical errors.

Be this as it may I wish not to bind myself to speak. Least of all on a predetermined subject. However, if it's necessary, then be so kind to advise me and I will supply something.

And.... a priori: lecture. To be frank I cannot see the possibility of coming to Ghent without that. If it's possible for you to supply me with such a *conférence* I shall be satisfied with the conditions set by you in regard to the days as well as the honorarium. If this latter covers the cost of the trip, I shall be more than pleased. At Antwerp

I was awarded more than royally. Realize I would not ask for any payment whatsoever if only I were not so poor that I cannot see a chance to pay my fare. So when that goal is reached, I shall be satisfied, and I give you plein pouvoir, on promise of approbation, as notaries have it.

Portraits? Alas! I would be more than glad to meet your request, but they lie at Amsterdam in control of a discourteous creditor. I am imprisoned there en effigie. Pleasant it is not. Should I succeed in redeeming them, the chance for which is still small, then I will remind myself of your flattering request.

I still must ask your pardon for the postponement of answering your letter. The cause is..... grieving. I exist off grievances so it seems, since impressions of another nature are sparse. The openhearted reception that was my good fortune at Antwerp (which for the greater part I credit to de Geyter) was a small isle in the ocean of my cares. The Netherlands kill me systematically, slow but sure. So now and then it occurs to me that psycically I am losing ground. Love of self, and the need for self preservation force me, it's true, to deny it in other moments, but the end no doubt will be that I succumb. It is my adverse luck that I was born in Holland, the country where only one thing, one belief rules, one god: money! Would it have been possible in any other country that Max Havelaar has benefitted no one but just the kind of people whom I so satirized in the same Havelaar? Indies' fortune makers, exploiters of the Javanese are en place, and shamelessly harangue about being"opposed to abuses", to which they personally owe their rise. 'Tis the world in reverse and it seems as if rich owners of brothels have been appointed to guardians of our morals. I have

repeatedly pointed this out but the commun accord is to hold oneself as if I am not read, and so I am not mentioned.

Will you be so kind to advise me of the day on which I shall speak at your city? Once more, I shall be pleased with all that you will determine.

With friendly greetings,
respectfully,
Yours truly,
Douwes Dekker.

XXIII.

Koeln, 2 August 1867.

Mr. Max Rooses.
Secretary etc.
Ghent.

Very esteemed Sir!

Quite in agreement of what you were so kind to inform me of in your friendly letter of 26 Juli, I received a letter this morning from Mr. Rolin-Jaquemynes, and at the same time one from the secretary of the Crombrugghe's Association. Both pieces were very respectful and I saw with much pleasure that they appealed to the agreements mad with joy. From my side I hope to fulfill those agreements in so far my strength will allow me, in view of the evidence of good will and distinction shown me by the gentlemen from Ghent.

So I hope to arrive in your city as early as the 18th, will stop at a hotel and immediately after that do myself the honor of a visit. However I can realize that there will be a great competition for rooms. Might it be expected too much to request of you to reserve a room for me in some

inn? I take the liberty to offer you my card for that purpose so that you could use it in your name along with the necessary message.

And still another request! I must answer mister Secretary of the v. Crombr's Association to his question concerning the subject of my lecture. But see, his signature -probably very plain for those who know it- is not legible for me who does not have the pleasure of knowing the gentleman. Once I read about some one who, in a similar situation, pasted such an address on a letter and thusly made of the signature an address. Well, I do not want to do this. Is it waes, woen or waem?

Mr. Rolin Jaquemyns I know from renommée and, just as you say, as a very esteemed and enlightened man. I like to be among Flemish. Of Antwerp I have the most pleasant memories. Still there is something particular in my conception of flemish originality; I felt myself at home in Antwerp, not because of its similarity to Holland -where I am not at home- but because of the difference.

Recommending myself for a speedy reply, and thanking you for your good will, I call myself with esteem,

Your servant,

Douwes Dekker.

XXIV.

(Postmark: Gand, 22 Aout '67)
Railway, grand station, one o'clock.

Highly esteemed Mister Rooses. Last evening, or rather last night, I intended to remain here a while yet in order to say goodbye to you,

but it's better that I go. A pity indeed, as I still had to attend to a few things in Ghent. I would have liked to talk to this one and that one, independent from the congress' intoxication. Since an intoxication it has been.

I would have liked to thank you for the many evidences of willingness to be of help and, really, I asmired you repeatedly because, in the midst of so much bustle, you still had time and heart available to attend to me.

It's not your fault that I suffered and being sad now. Do you realize that? . I think not, since every one has his own corns. Still, I would like to know, as psychological proof, whether you can give yourself an account of the very sad mood in which I leave Ghent. I pose that question also to mister Rolin-Jaquemynes.

Returned to Koeln, I shall, after a couple of days of calmness, of which I am in need, after having refreshed nyself by looking at and treating myself to mathematical truth, to consider if there is a means to consider if there is a means to continue my initial relations with Ghent. If that succeeds I will soon see you again, and that will be a real pleasure to me

I thank you sincerely for all that you did for me, and take with me the most pleasant memories*

With esteem and friendship,

Yours truly,

Douwes Dekker.

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*) (It must have been on the occasion of this Congress that Multatuli saw mister Van Lennep again, as mentioned in Volume IV.) MDDS.

XXI. *

*)Of this letter the first page was lost due to lending out, according to Mr. Max Rooses.) MDDS.

drawings were lost, that you know.) not occupied myself. I have, on the contrary, so often fulminated against Chambermen for dressing up their speeches in the Official Record, and to Wintgens (one of the leaders of the conservatives who sent me a state paper "because the Courant had so mutilated his speech") I answered him that I took the road between that mutulation and his lying. Since lying it is when one dresses up a thing to better than it was.

Thusly I would not have occupied myself with my "isms", if it had not been difficult for me to deny you anything, you who have been so friendly and obliging to me.

One request -that comes from being obliging!- would you be willing to send me a few newspapers that contain the étourderies of the most too young, rash old Gentleman Vreede? From a Dutch paper I learn that the clerical papers have translated my address at Crombrugghe as follows:

About the right to condemn a feeling.

" " " " deny a conviction.

I think those paraphrases rather free. Come on, send me a few newspapers about that matter. Also I read that mr. Vreede was completely justified because I had preached "apostasy". Dear god! Thusly history is written!

Very, very much I would like to get closer acquainted with you, sans congress, sans toasting, sans that bustle. As for me, such things are out of my line. My taste, and my talent lie in quiet meditation. With

With inner joy I meet my mathematical -or unmathematical if you will- studies again. What's inexact causes me pain. I hope, I hope, to find a simplified method for trigonometry. All scholars will be thankful to me. And I still have to investigate many things of that kind. It's sublime poesy, that lifting up of nature's chaste attire, that seeking for her forms, that inquiring into her proportions, that palpatation of her waist, the penetration into the womb of truth. See, there you have the delight of mathematics.

And -fop!- I am her friend! Really, she does not repell me, even if she does not so easily surrend herself. Just mystery enough to remain wished for, desired and admired. I've seen her ankle, her knee, yes now and then her hip and loins.... but, but, then she darts away from me, and escapes. Daphne that she is, sylph that she is, will o'the wisp, courtisanne, virgin.... and withal the great mighty Isis, the female Jehovah, who is, was and will be, unchangeable, untouchable, indestructible: the universe, truth.

See, for that reason too I'm no good for congresses and speeches. 'Tis impossible to speak for fifteen minutes sans saying a hundred times something that's not quite exact, that is: a lie. That nature does not tolerate. That makes her angry, cruel, bloodthirsty. She punishes with death the tower climber who deviates 1/10000000 part of a stripe from his centre of gravity. We humans would say: "O, the difference was so little, let him stay up there. Besides, he has a wife and children...." Folly!

I have much to do, also sans that trigonometry. If I properly give birth to all that's in my heart.... oh, I'm so afraid that I'll be

embarrassed to get rooms for all those children. And then I must push them away, which is a pity.

Adieu, dearest Rooses. No doubt you're tired after all your cares. I greet you sincerely.

Douwes Dekker.

XXVI.

Koeln, 12 October ' 67.

Dear Mister Rooses. Thanks for the papers and for your letter. The papers I return herewith. They made (as did others which I read about that matter) a sad impression upon me. "I should not let it bother me?" Oh, one does not know what one should, and I believe that I each "shooder" should do as I should he be in my position. For these seven years since I've written and said various things. My only study, mostly when writing was: to express myself as clearly as possible. I see daily that I did not succeed in that. As a result of that impotence there is much suffering, by me, by my family and by others. That incident with Vreede and its consequences, gives me more evidence of that impotence, hence my sadness. *"Mais pourquoi parlez vous donc?** someone shouted at Emile de Giardin when he demonstrated that speaking and writing were in vain. *He* was stunned by that question. I would not have been. I would have a reply. A sad reply, a bitter reply, but *après tout* a fitting reply. "Dear people, believe that I would not put a single letter on paper were it not that my family is in penury, and since once for all writing is the only trade I know (and according to you neglect). Will you feed my family for saw or chisel work, for

cargo carrying? I like that better, and such work I consider more useful.... etc.

And if only I knew that profitable writing trade! But there is just what is so difficult! My incapability to write books runs into the absurd. There lies before me ½ drama. It contains 20, 30 very delightful lines. The rest is nil. And I do not see the possibility to add the other half because it's not in me. During a month since I sit there tickling my soul with sickening self abuse. In vain! Nothing comes. The im potence is not shameful (since I have not hired out to the world as dramatist, I have never claimed that I could make something.) But the tickling? Alas!

Dégoutant isn't it? Disgraceful, foul, ignominious! No! And that is just the sad part of the matter: I must.

Since on the success of that drama I had built the hope of being re-united with my wife and children who have been taken away from me through a singular run of circumstances. See, that drama had to be "delightful". I would go to Holland with it, lecture from it, travel around with it as a trooper.... good. I would save up money for the trip from Milan to.... too.... that I still do not know. But my drama had to be so"delightful" that I could earn so much money with it in order to know also how and where I could provide a roof over the heads of my dear family. What a wealth of hope! No, hope it was not since I was well aware that I could not make anything, but yet.... what a high spun wish! Too high by far, that's evident since, as I said, the"fertige" half is no good and the other half won't come out of my pen. Should

I add a prologue to it: "Ladies and gentlemen, my drama is poor, but rememeber that I wrote it out of penury? That would be brilliant, would it not?

Still, it contains sublime passages that give me the conviction that I would write well if I were not compelled to write. Is it not pitiful?

Your sortie against trigonometryism is amusing, and I grasp you well. But, but.... I like exact things. I find poesy in precision and I grasp the idealization of the bookkeepers craft, of the balance of figures and lines. Those things are closer to my soul (and no doubt this is the same with you) than poesy would be, than artificial emotion, the flattest thing I know. But I go further and claim that just striving for truth is the original call of the composer, immaterial if that truth is rose-red or grey, elegantly rounded off or angular. A small example, not to prove something but to make my idea clear. My father was a seaman who sailed, when I was still a child, to the West. At home I heard much talk about Surinam, negroes, sugar plantations, etc. Seamanship too, in our family was the order of the discourse. Whoso was not a sailor, was not a human being, he who did not command a ship was not a gentleman. He who did not smell of tar, stank. He who preferred a walk in the park to knocking about the dirty Amsterdam wharf, where ships lay at anchor, was supposed to be decadent. In that atmosphere I grew up and I assure you that I have had difficulty to learn to drop such crazy prejudgments. At school I got

acquainted with a boy whose father traveled to Petersburg and Danzig.... to the North Pole perhaps, que sais-je! Well now I declined my friend the right to call himself a seaman's child "because in Russia there were no negroes, and since no sugar cane was planted at Danzig."

Now I think that for centuries since we have sought the seamanship of poesy too much -or exclusively- in sugar and negroes, too little in traveling on the sea and wrestling with the difficulties we have to go through with the armored heart that Horace thought he needed to sail into the ocean of the unknown in order to land somewhere, no matter where. It's not in the sugar, it's in the voyage. The trip to squaring the circle is as much stimulating (just as foolish, but this is not the question here) as any other crusade. 2 X 2 = 4 is -if anything is holy- holy, and if that truth ever could have been unknown, its discoverer was the greatest seer, the greatest creator, the greatest poietes of the world. Perhaps you call the "seeing" of such a truth otherwise, but in accordance with my impression awareness, knowing, being able conflue, and I guess that about this there is less difference of opinion than difference of expression. Would you take the trouble to read over once what I say in Ideas about the connection between "loving" and "knowing". It's a tirade that ends with Humboldt, Lovelace and Mungo park. (Idea 517) You should know that of my Ideas I have only a few loose sheets. I have no Havelaar, no Anthology, no Loveletters, no Free Labor. It grieves me that I never can look up anything. Do you have the Reprints? I wanted to ask you if you don't find the Japanese Discourses piquant?

I do not think that in the writer's world there is an example of the

obstacles with which I have to wrestle. This, for instance, that I do not know what there is written about me. Recently I learned by accident that I was reviewed in the Revue Brittanique, but I can't find out in what number. It seems that I was praised there and blamed -well that's indifferent to me- but the E. I. question is the subject there, and concerning which I certainly would have something to say. I feel how that must be, an argument that I have disproved unto boredom.

1) "Abuse of authority, extortion, etc. etc.

2) "This occurred under the conservatives,

3) "Down with the conservatives, long live the liberals, et tout sera pour le mieux."

Aye! There you have again one of those things that cause me to look down with grief on my incapacity to express myself with exactness, or so that I will be grasped. I am very, very liberal, ultra liberal, and that's why I am an open opponent of what in Holland is called the liberals. And now what concerns the Indies specifically, the Javanese never had it worse than after the so called liberal principles penetrated there. Those principles can be condensed into the following theses:

"The government exploits the Javanese in connivance with the Chiefs. That government is greedy, low, cruel, tyrannical.

We want free labor, that is: not the government must plunder the Javanese from now on but individuals, the private fortune seekers who are totally unselfish and always noble minded."

So that's that! How nice it is to have a political opinion! And that flat theme I find wherever I go. In Chambers it is defended by millionaires, who know from experience how pragmatic is their system, and the people call those fellows respectable human beings, and do not feel how they beat me in the face by listening to those persons always saying that my Havelaar is such a delightful book. There lies bitter irony in the popularity I caused. Huet (in De Nederland) is the only one who recently had the courage to point out that the country owed me something. Do not think that I complain about missing a reward.... I complain about penury. I ask not wealth, I ask bread and the possibility to see my wife and children again who from penury had to seek refuge in Italy as they were offered a roof there that I could not supply....

Well, and all of that flows from actions such as those from the daily papers you recently sent me to read. That's why such things sadden me. Should not the people think that the simple truth (and intricate truth is non-existent) clearly expressed and made comprehensive? That possibility does not exist, and the conviction of it dismays me.

I wished to locate in Flanders and had built castles in the air on that hope. The question was if bread was to be had for labor. But for what labor? To write for an existing paper will not go. I never saw a program that I could join. The only thing might be to start

my own paper. Well, for that I lack the means. I should have to ask all my subscribers for money so I could survive the first day, what do I say.... to pay for the trip to Antwerp or Ghent. I had hopes and still think of it that the flemish movement might make use of me. But that has difficulties within me and outside of me. Within me because of my desire of battling against french inclination. I feel myself too weak to preach union with decayed Holland. Outside of me because the flemish movement will stumble over belief. Beautiful, rich Flanders is parted by the cleft between catholics and freethinkers. The latter in its Belgian sense. You and your soul mates are closer to the Brussels free thinkers, be they french, than to the Dutch wigs, believe me. After a flemish revolution, after a union with the rest of Netherland, the first thing the Flemish would have to do is revolt. And comical: this goes equally for both flemish parties. The catholics against the reformed orthodoxy, the freethinkers against the dutch narrowmindedness. The catholics would not be allowed to hold a procession in the open, and for the freethinkers no bowling during church hours. No Fleming would find what he sought through union with Holland, neither the clerical nor the freethinker. The questions are:

1º Does the flemish movement need the prospect of union with Holland? (I believe yes. Withdrawing from the french influence cannot happen sans uniting with something else.)

2º Is sincere uniting of the Netherlands now possible?

No. The parts are disparate. I claim that the points of difference

between Flanders and Holland are more serious than those between Flanders and the Walloon provinces. That does not appear so today because there is no friction. That friction would a ppear immediately after the union.

The Hollander is (sans belief matters too) intolera nt. Whoso does not speak, walk, sit, eat etc. as he, is a boor, an uncultured blade. The confidential that prevailed at Ghent (for instance at the Koren-maatshcappy) was "the circonstance". Oh well, When one is out for joy one can act so but.... do you think that the respectable hollander when at home, does not abhor such carousing? Beer, smoking, sitting mixed, singing sans notes, fy! Perhaps (very perhaps) you'll meet with something like that at the congress in The Hague in 1868, but if so, then just think it to be an immature inconsiderateness, to be amended by enforced stiffness after your departure. But, you think, this is secondary? Well now, never will any one with a flemish accent (and many of you speak so well!) be accepted in the 2nd Chamber. You fellows would be tolerated, that's all.

3º. What might be done in order to make the points of difference between Flanders and Holland less sharp?

This is the main question. Well, the answer is not difficult. Both parties must be made to turn liberal in the true sense. For that among you catholicism and in Holland protestantism must be extirpated. But as easy as this is said, so difficult is its execution. I acknowledge that Holland has changed much during the last twenty years. (Indeed very much. The difference between now and my youth

is enormous. Today things are uttered that one did not dare think then.

Do not be deceived by dutch conditions from the sound of the word liberal. This word has a peculiar meaning there and has nothing in common with anti-clerical, nothing at all. The colonial question prevails and colors all. To be liberal is, ut supra, individual fortune seeking abroad, as opposed to official exploitation of the javanese. Yes.... and a few secondary matters, such as about excises, protecting tariffs and sabbath-laws. But the respectable dutch liberal abhors free thinking as much as did the congress of Mechelen. Free-labor, yes, but .... with God! No protective tariff yes, but christian, always quite christian. No royal family despotism, oh yes, but bossism of distinguished white ties! No droit divin, yes, but respectability.

And even they who have dethroned God and do not believe in bible spooks, remain stiff, trammeled in the bands in which once for all they were swathed by old fangled belief. Servabit odorem testa diu! Of this I am convinced since I repeatedly catch myself with a remainder of prostestantery. Once imbutus remains imbutus. A thing like that penetrates the blood. It paints the bones, as madder with which chickens are fed.

I must, in spite of all this, acknowledge having a great desire to join the Flemish movement. Its possibility would be my duty. As thereby I would provide my children with a fatherland of which now they are deprived. Yes, that is if I could move, that is live, then I would do it! For the present it's probably a vain effort. I am not certain of my existence for a single day and cannot rely

on being able to execute the program that I can sum up, Dunkirk, Maastricht, Delfzyl, one Dutch triangle. That would be my thesis.

And so, in my long letter, I have returned to mathematics, which you batter so amusingly. But you don't mean to. You mean it no more than does the believer who places "reason" so lowly. Tell him something unreasonable and at once he retrieves cast-away reason in order to combat you. You too would do that if I told you something un-geometrical (that is illogical) Is not mathesis the logic of extensivness? And is training in it to be disdained? Does it not give us the habit to measure with compasseses and square in order to judge as exactly as we can also there where we cannot measure with square and compass?

Did you enjoy your trip to Paris? A boring place, I think. I am always glad when some one else has been there, it's always like a finished job to me. Even as "*jeune homme*" one has to spend much to enjoy little. Sincere greetings from your highly esteeming,

Douwes Dekker.

I write poorly, my eyes being weak. Joyful prospect. I've changed my address: Breitestrasse 123.

* * *

TO MRS. DOUWES DEKKER VAN WYNBERGEN.

XXVII.

Koeln, 24 Augustus.

Dearest lovely Tine! Returned from Ghent, dead tired, hoarse and all in. I sent you a program from there of the festivities, but write I could not. And still I cannot do so at length since I tremble with fatigue. All those days I've been in a state of intoxication, and I need a little respite before I'll be able to describe it to you. As for my official task, it went satisfactorily. I was applauded on the three occasions I spoke in public. 1º. In the Association of Crombrugghe, before an audience of 1300 Ghent workers and the members of the congress. 2º At the congress itself about a little freedom in the use of some words and expressions. 3º. Within the congress about the flemish movement. About the first two occasions there is something in the courant I'm sending you, the only one of which I accidentally could get hold. Staying at such a congress, in a town such as Ghent (large, everything far apart, no money for cabs and choking heat) is tiresome. Besides that I was very much the tourist. Introductions and ovations without end from early morning till late at night, not a moment respite.And I felt continually that I was addressed just to make me speak. Well, I did so, and many times in the hallways I had quite a crowd around me. There I always had success with the Flemish. But the Hollanders intrigued terribly, and I had two bitter confrontations, and many bitter remarks. Those two confrontations I will tell you

about later. Now first some facts.

Going to Ghent I was very hard up and now I have a little for myself so that I'll be at ease for necessities during the next 14 days. Asking for help I did not. It wasn't the right time. But I will try to join the flemish movement, which pretends to have the language a nd literature in perspective but indeed wants a political separation from Belgium. I consider Belgium a failure (as a political unit). The Flemish want to join the Netherlands, and the way I've learned to know the Ghentians, the workers of Ghent who had been at war with France, I consider their plans as feasible. Those are fiery, courageous men. With difficulty many persons had to protect prof. Vreede from Utrecht. They wanted to tear the man apart because he attacked me, and he was bodily forced from the tribune and shoved outside through the door. A huge scandal. And I didn't say a word. (This latter precisely.)

Now I tell you only that in Ghent, with the terrific bustle, speeches, festivities, intrigues by Hollanders, heat, fatigue, agitation, etc.etc., I have not succeeded to bring up anything concerning my personal interests. But my plan is to locate in Flanders, to take part in the flemish movement and in that way provide our children with a possible fatherland. For that purpose I must turn to the leaders of the movement and work on an extensive article about it. That is my priority now. Oh, all would be simple, and I would be received with open arms (the workers asked me to come to them) but.... but.... the curse is that I always have to ask for money as a settling

in Belgium sans having satisfied the creditors in Brussels, is impossible.

I was visited,(causing a great shock) by the Ruyter, the baker. But see, the man, who is a Ghentian, had attended my lecture at the Crombrugghe Association, and was lovely and soft spoken. 'Twas touching. He had friendly words of greeting for you and the children, and spoke kindly of Edu and Non. He inquired about their education and everything with sincerity. He just had witnessed a little sample of how the Hollanders persecute me. (Vreede in fact had entered when there was applause after my speech. Sans knowing what I had said, or even what my subject was, he would protest the applause (in the supposition that I had scolded Holland.)

Well, the workers were furious, and the furor was so great that he could not be brought to reason. He kept on shouting:"I am an honest hollander, and want to defend my country."

I heard he was a little tipsy coming from a dinner. Of course, every body, including the hollanders, since the matter was too crazy, took my part. They had to or be torn to pieces. Afterwards they still could distort to suit themselves. Later on I heard them say already: oh well, Vreede had dined.... he is always so obstinate.... he would not listen to reason.... but.... it still was nice that he, in the supposition that his country was insulted protested and stood his ground against a furious mob!

This Vreede is a professor, a respectable man, solemn, learned.... all what you might want. But against me he could conduct himself as a scamp. Imagine, he began by saying that he did not know me, had not read

anything or little from me and just now had entered the hall and so had not heard my speech, and when people shouted: then be silent! he kept on yelling: "I am an honest hollander and won't keep still!" Then there was fighting. Many wanted, justly, to protect him, and at the last moment people succeeded in ousting him. Poor fellow, when he began, and I (aware that many only know me from my Havelaar) grasped before all others that he was mixed up, and called to prof. de Vries: "quick, warn him, he is compromising himself," and I already knew my workers, who had received me the night before as no king is received. But he was drunk indeed, either from wine or from foolish false patritotism. Perhaps of both. Well, at Crombrugghe's Association it was easy for me to keep silent. People took my part so strongly that any word of mine would have been out of place. Many complimented me about my silence. But that the Hollanders, and I must say the Belgians too, after that, on successive congress days, treated Vreede as if nothing had happened, grieved me. I thought I was entitled to an apology. Well, of that there appears to be no thought. Everyone thinks that Vreede acted like a fool, but.... 'twas against me.... and against me all means are justified.

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TO JULIUS DE GEYTER.

XXVIII.

Koeln 30 August 67.

Dear de Geyter. Your piece is sublimely beautiful. I will do my best to learn to recite it and hope to persuade many a one in my opinion that no more sincere battle cry can be made than such a reproach.*

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*) (The here mentioned poem is: "Finis patriae" published in the periodical "De Kunstkronyk.) MDDS.

Where is your intellect when you think that I would tie tails to that incident with prof. Vreede? On the contrary, I've cut off the tail of that event by writing him a friendly letter in which I offer him the opportunity: "as to patriotism, make your choice between me and fancy orators." Well, he answered me politely and thanks me for what he calls my "nice action".

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*)(That letter from prof. Vreede I still have. It's dated 27 August 1867 and the first words are: "Thanks for your nice act." Further on the flemish movement comes in for discussion.) MDDS.

So that matter is closed. The reason I wished for the newspapers was to enable me to make observations, and to train myself in judging the course of opinions. To me it's a journalistic study, nothing else. How could you think that I would mint coin from such foul metal? That, for sure, is in no wise my manner, don't you think?

I've made many observations at the congress of Ghent. I am busy to work them into conclusions and plans. As soon as I shall be ready with that I will inform you. If my plans do not all fail (but I am very much bound) I hope to be able to see you at Antwerp within not too long a time. In the midst of many cares and objections, a distant little spark enlightens a little hope. If I do not fool myself the flemish movement beckons me, and the possibility is that for my children a fatherland will be born there! That's not a small thing for those little wanderers!

Well, if that happens I shall never forget that you paved the way for it.

Prof. Vreede writes me for example that he will re-read my "One thing and another", and that he perhaps was mistaken about my neerlandism, "as Lenaertz about the piece of de Geyter." The comparison is very timely and well.

I do not at all believe that Lenaertz intended something minimizing, but in the eyes of the public it had to appear as if he were the hero, and you the blighter. In Holland such misunderstanding too prevails. Whoso drones up the trite tales about the heroic deeds of the forefathers, is applauded. Whoso with just as good intentions (at least) points to their errors, whoso insists on curing evils is called a traitor. That's unreasonable, and probable my grief about that was my so quickly observing Lenaertz' slip up, and opposing it.

Your piece is delightful, it contains brilliant strophes. But prey, how strangly you treat the metre. Why be so careless on this point? No one more than I is annoyed by all the narrow trammels (I think I've given enough evidence of it) but if one wears a bodice it must be well laced.

I acknowledge being a strong purist on this point, yes, as an elderly lieutenant-colonel: "Gentlemen, you are allowed to dress civilly, you may take to the street in dressing-gown, but .... when you are in uniform I demand that it meets with regulations."

It will be strange to many that among others I think Schiller and Goethe careless. I separate this entirely from poesy. Of course! Poesy has need, neither of dressing gown nor of uniform, but when it chooses to bind itself, let it then take care that the bond does not restrict it, and that with bodice et al, by its own power give form to the corset and"that it's a smooth fit," as the ladies say.

What does that bodice mean if it's not laced? Then give me a dress sans taille.

Sincere greetings to your dear wife and tell her before all that I think your piece is delightful. That, I hope, will please her.

At Ghent I had Veuillot's book with me in order to return it to you but the bustle, the heat, the laziness that prevented myself.... and the dislike from burdening you with a parcel were the causes that I took it back with me. So later! I have still more from you and hope to answer all of it properly some time.

Friendly greetings, and believe me,

Yours truly,
Douwes Dekker.

Perhaps my feelings do deceive me -but yet
To me it seems- perhaps so near! -your task
Be mine, and that of all whose being
Explodes in anger when thinking of the shame
Of domination -plainly be enwritten.

I feel it coming, that calls for deeds
I hear a voice that clearly reproaches me
That not since long instead of the word
(That too is really a deed) I chose facts.
I ponder on it...........
                                        There is a time for all!
It would me dear to me! since verily I am tired
Of talking, speaking, writing, discoursing,
That every circus clown can grasp as well as we
Or better yet than we.
                                        Well then as soon's I know
Along which route the new duty beckons us
(Till now I'm not at one with me)
I'll follow it down, *and deviate I shall not*.
Farewell for now! There is a time for all!*

……

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*)(Mr. Dr. Julius Pee published, in addition to a few letters from Tine, seventeen letters from Multatuli to Julius de Geyter in the Nederl. Museum of 1894, volume II. They span many years. The latest letter is of December 1880, and all testify to sincerity and mutual confidence.) MDDS.

TO C. BUSKEN HUET.

XXIX.

Koeln, 20 Sept. 1867.

Dear mister Huet. Just now I receive the f 25, for which I thank you. Concerning the flemish movement I still do not know if I can give it my full sympathy. If that doesn't come I'm not worth a farthing. And if it does come I believe I can help them, provided I will be able to move and a little relieved from the bonds that oppress me. I had gone into correspondence about the matter and waited till it would be worth their while to make me a proposition. Full of tension (since as always success was related to bringing back my wife) I looked forward to anything. I counted the hours, there came a letter, most friendly and polite, but containing that my v.i.p. intended to leave for Paris the next day, to visit the exposition at his ease. That worked as a cold shower. And I haven't much time to wait. I feel completely spent.

That's now about ten days ago. My wife's release being urgent, I thought of something else. I intended, if possible to write a drama, and take it to Holland. Then first surrender and let me be imprisoned for fourteen days (or three weeks, I'm not sure) and subsequently travel all around with my drama till I would have money enough for bringing home my family.

Well, that drama is -how shall I say it- half finished. No, since it does not please me I may tear it up and then there's nothing ready.

Really, I can't make a thing. It's forced, and I feel like a merry andrew as I think things up.

Wherever I get on a hobby horse it goes better and I have for instance 2, 3 pages which, if nothing comes from the whole thing, are worth more than the whole piece would be minus them. But with three pages I can't earn money. So the rest has to be bungled into it. Disgusting.

And you, a novel? Listen, it is as if I hear that an anatomist is occupied with baking cakes. Oh, if I (you always say: in the event I,is that compulsive? It seems so broad!) were in charge of your spirit, I would give it other work to do. If any one among those who meet you would hit you with the cliche: "*la critique est aisée*, etc." I will answer once for all.... in my drama. Yes, no doubt I'll be able to bungle it into my drama. Something like:

> Is art weightier than critique? Pray....
> Critique is art, and not the lightest!

In the realm of Dutch art I never read anything more artful than your critiques. Will you cast away that e from kriti~~e~~k?

For godsake, a novel! A novel with knot, portraying, tension, uncle from america and ending. Huh! I -now under the impression of my drama-bungling- feel something like fastidiousness from making things. And still it contains something good, because from time to time one discovers an aêr that produces something better than the tubers for which one went out. O, o, if only I could take my time with that drama! See, I would know how to give Holland a stage.

Then I would for once request you to review sans mercy, Shakespeare, Goethe and Schiller. That work from you I would study, and I agree to deliver something good after that.

And is it not miserable that I, who now do not think so favorable about all those three gentlemen, must inpire myself with their example in order to be able to deliver something? I write banalities (for filling) which I try to excuse with: "Shakespeare and Schiller too did this!" Something exactly against my being. I would not be proud of it if people said: "exactly Goethe!" truly not. It stands to reason that I make exception of a few morceaux of those three writers. But the whole?!

At Ghent I talked a good deal about you. I was promised that they would order your destruction of Ten Cate's Creation.

That the Flemish will get no help from Holland, I've told them. Misery is to be foreseen in that entire matter. Winning their present struggle would be the signal of a new one. But they maintain tha they want to get shed of Belgium.... and I predict that Belgium will be split in two (or three) even though the Flemish do not stand to gain by exchanging Brussels for The Hague. They are obstinate, or steadfast, and intend to convert the Hollanders to.... yes, to what? Naive they are, those good outcasts. Can you tell me once what is the accent in alibi? I mean ālĭbī or ălĭ́bī?

The way Schiller and Goethe, yes Shakespeare too, play around with prosody, they may answer for to our-dear-lord. But all is swallowed from those gentlemen. "It must be good," people say, "Goethe does it so."

A child was begging along the street
And sought shade under appletrees.
Weeping, crying, calling: o my mother, etc.

That is fitting for german and english ears! Well, the french too are not squeamish about it

Je chante ce héros qui règne sur etc.

I can deliver a collection from Schiller's Wallenstein. that is a curious one.

That De Gids has recalled you pleases me very much. It bothered me to see you next to that golden snuffbox.*

---

*)(This refers to the review by Huet of Multatuli's "One thing and another" printed next to a certain story "The Golden Snuffbox". Huet's review later was published separately by van Helden and afterwards also taken up in the Literary Fantasies. To the separate printing was added a short preface in context with a verdict on "One Thing and Another" in Letter-treatises by a certain mr. Duymaer van Twist of Deventer. 'Originally I thought,' says Mr. Huet, 'that if not the power, then at any rate the name of the author forced me, before permitting this reprint, to compare his announcement with mine and maintain my praise (since he speaks with disdain about mister Dekker's work) against his blame. However, when I found no evidence anywhere in his four pages of a ripe judgment, but throughout a strong feeling of self love, it seemed to me that Multatuli was in no need of support against such a nagger.
'Or what else must one do than hesitating between a smirk and a sigh, when hearing a person going by the name of

Duymaer van Twist yes, but who for the rest promises little and shows no accomplishment testifying in a professoral tone as if he, during a long and useful life, had made a study of German politics his specialty: Never have I grasped that systematic shouting against Prussia, although I know that the Netherlands were rather well transported with Austrian metallics; I have always thought that for Austria there was a place in South Germany, and I still believe, provided liberally ruled and organized, could take a head seat in a South German confederation." Mr. van Twist, one would say can scarcely suppose in earnest that outside of him any one in the Netherlands at this time pays attention to what he, where such situations are involved has always thought, or at no time grasped. Just as little value have his sayings when of Mr. Dekker's writings he says: I want to discuss a single point from Multatuli's book and be done with it, "or from Mr. Dekker personally: "It is now once for all the habit of Multatuli to cast away everything what not exactly suits him." "Multatuli seems indeed not to have much grasp of the parliamentary regime." "Such absurdities may not, in my view, pass unobserved." "I doubt if Multatuli the man is to gauge mister Bosscha's depth." While reading such things, a desire to take on mister Van Twist one does not feel rising within. It is just a sad phenomenon that for such verdicts there seems to be space to be had in national periodicals of some name." So far Mr. Huet.

That I cite such phrases here is because of the little piece by mr. Duymaer van Twist, whom Dekker thought to be a cousin of the former Governor General by that name, with the widely known admission of that Governor General: that he did not reply from fear of being partial, the only thing is that since the appearance of Max Havelaar there never was anything said from that side in public.

There is, though, after Multatuli's passing, and after the death of Mr. A. I. Duymaer van Twist, a letter published from the latter that indicates an attack on Multatuli.

When, namely, in 1882 many compatriots organized to offer Multatuli a national testimonial, Algemeen Handelsblad protested against it, and said among other things: Mr. Douwes Dekker who publicly speaks ill of Mr. Duymaer vna Twist...." ("certainly a less common use of the word," said Mr. J. Versluys in a reply) "yet accepts from him an important gift of money."

Mr. J. Versluys turned as a friend of Multatuli to the editor of that paper with the demand to prove that accusation or withdraw it. The editor's informer turned out to be Mr. W. B. Bergsma, who maintained his accusation

> but proves were not rendered to Mr. Versluys.
>
> When Dekker kearned about the charge he declared pertinently it was untrue. Indeed he pondered quite a while how such a tale had come into being. I remember how repeatedly it was talked about and how many times Dekker with his usual anxious precision just to tell the truth has traced back if there had not in an earlier period something could have happened that now gave cause to such a charge.
>
> His conclusion was:"No, impossible. I know for certain, never!" This he told to Versluys too, and to any one who would listen.
>
> To those who knew him personally the matter is decided; for those who did not have that privilege the works, and now also the letters of Multatuli are the documents that make it possible to judge his credibility.
>
> Recently, in 1892, the letter in question which Mr. van Twist wrote to Mr. Bergsma in which he claims to have offered Dekker in 1858 or 1859 to have offered Dekker f50.- which the latter accepted.
>
> But that letter contains the instruction to Mr. Bergsma that he might show it to the chief editor of Handelsblad, and even then "in confidence", and before all not to Mr. Versluys as: presumably he is one of Dekker's friends who the presumably will have had the impudence to assure that the fact is untrue.... and then this will have no other result than that Dekker will scold me for being an infamous liar."
>
> Who is the most credible, Multatuli or van Twist?)

I've talked to him, the writer of that piece, I mean. He seems to be a good fellow but he smells of the Chamber where he is a stenographer. Quite respectable, and (the same as the gentleman of the Spectator) always *à la piste* of a "*sujet*". Gut, there I have a sujet! A seeking novelist! Don't give me away and don't rob me of it in front of my nose. In this brilliant drama (high politics, hm,hm!)

it does not fit. But I'll save it for a next one!

"Belletrie is the only terrain on which you and the Gids-men can meet without collission?" Oh, that doesn't count. Your piece about Aurora too was belletristic. You will not be able to efface yourself neither in novels nor in critique. All that comes from the nut tree smells of nuts.

Sincere greetings to you and your wife,

Yours truly,

Douwes Dekker.

XXX.

Koeln, 26 September.

Dear Mister Huet.

The matter with prof. Vreede must be finished for me, and that it is indeed since I wrote him after the incident in a not hostile manner, something like:

Very learned Sir,

From what happens at Crombrugghe's Association I p erceived that You do not know me at all. Not abroad to I attack the scoundrels who corrupt the Netherlands, that I do at Home, in the capital, preferably in the King's palace as you, when so willing, can look up on page.... of my ideas (where I relate about the congress at Amsterdam.)

Feeling high esteem for the resoluteness of your character, that does not float along in the little stream of the times, I wished to be known to you, wherefore I take the liberty to offer you herewith a Copy of my "One thing and Another" from which you will be able to perceive....."

I recall no further. No doubt something as: that I am at least as patriotic as flatterers. I have a copy of the letter but cannot locate it. I moved, and my little bunch of pap ers are all mixed up.

Well, Vreede has answered politely to that letter. He thanks me for the nice treatment of the incident. That thanking sprouts from a false conception. He and many others thought that this time I would properly castigate the old Vreede for once. Well now, I like the guy. Besides, he was in morethan one way so mixed up that there was no honor in attacking him. And.... at Crombrugghe's Association he got enough, more than I liked! The matter between me and Vreede is ended.

But I quite agree with you that it seems singular that "the press" who cannot know of my dislike to mint coin from poor metal, and which would not pay attention to my dislike besides, has generally remained so silent. (In Belgium it got much publicity.) I say it seems singular as indeed that silence is but a continuation of the general tactic to ignore me. The hatred of the liberals against Vreede did not have the strength to overcome the aversion they have of naming me.

Mr. Salvador sent me a number of the Asmodée (in which naming me does not seem to be a task) that cites a piece from a small daily of Dendermond ('Tis nº 37). Except for the extolling of my speech, I must say that the Dendermonder rather well tells the truth.

I would not be writing you today were it not that I have to request you to change my address for the courants to Breitstrasse 123. The people with whom I lived moved and I too had to go. For two days I was without a room where I could sit down, and I walked around in Koeln.

Still I was happy as I had a letter from my wife. She toils, ails and suffers.... but is still alive. Will my drama come to an ending in time... and shall it be in shape for recital in time? I don't know!

You put, as my mother used to say, a little butter in my meal, by saying that not all of it needs to be first rate. I really might have known that myself, but either I am in no mood, and then I'm incapable for what's most ordinary, or I'm feeling so vain that I vomit from yesterday's ordinary work. And then rustles in my ear your(very pertinent) demand of "proportionate perfection". O, if I didn't have to, I would write no drama!

When you have an opportunity will you then tell me what in the State bible is meant by italics and parentheses? No doubt italics indicate: additive to clear up the text, but if so, why a parenthesis? A not-canonical passage? And the meaning of the italics does not suffice as there should be more italics.

I am curious for your novel, but fear.... fear! Yes I fear for you as I fear for myself. I doubt that you can do tricks. My drama. O, that's something else.... high politics! Tirades on the spirit of the century. I do not have to invent fables. And what there is in it of fables is still from some one else. I'll say so candidly.

Have you, perhaps, already returned from your satirising Vondel? That poor fellow! I can visualize him sitting in the pawn broker's office. at that dirty Burgwal. And now a statue! Oh well, the observation is old, but it remains as sad as when it was new. But I must acknowledge that I do not know Vondel well enough to lament about him. I would like very much to devote a little time to him

in order to read him well. Would it go with him as with Schiller and Goethe mostly? I place Goethe so little high I'm always afraid to say so. But if I had the leisure to deal with him explicitly, I would dare; further I make bold to motivate my verdict so that at any rate it would not look absurd.

Amusing it is how the Germans, with their habit of deifying have chased both of their demi-gods into heaven.

Recently I read in a political article a citation from Wallenstein: "You come.... but you come a little late." What a depth, eh? And how easy it is to be read by a people that raises such a line to a maxim. And every day or so I find still more absurd citations from the "immortal" works of the poet: [illegible]. I wished that meat and housing here were as cheap as fame.

Ungrateful I am! As see, I find in the Asmodée a certain Multafero who speaks about"god worshipism".'Tis true, he does not add: "as the immortal Multatuli calls it." But that the so inclined reader guesses.

Be you and your wife (who thinks people are amusing) most sincerely greeted, from yours truly,

Douwes Dekker.

It is already so cold here that I have difficulty writing. To improve I first have to get some exercise. And in the street I see all kinds of things that ruin my iambes. 'Tis drudgery! If or when I come again, I will learn a trade. And I still would, if I could win my family back with it.

XXXI.

Koeln, 4 October 1867.

Dear Mister Huet. I read there in the abstracts from the dutch daily papers in the Haarlemmer of today, that I was reviewed in "Utrecht's Dagblad" and that in a rather offensive manner. Now this would not particularly shock me if I didn't think that this paper is edited or masterminded by Pr. Vreede. If this is so, I'll think it's an insult. I have treated the man (from disdain for the kind of grievance, and the flat cause, but that he didn't know) gently, and he seems to acknowledge this himself.

Be this as it may, I am really forced to ask you for another favor. Would you send me that Utr. daily? Then I'll be able to judge if it demands a reply. And if it is not asking too much, can you supply me with the number of the revue Brittanique or North British review, in which I am spoken about? I can guess the contents: "flattering writing. Java maltreated, free labor, liberalism, il tout sera pour le mieux." The old flat cliche.

I am very curious if that U. daily is Vreede's paper. It would go beyond my ken. It would shame him.

With friendly greetings

t. a. v.

Douwes Dekker.

My drama is no good. I cannot make a thing, it seems. I am no writer.

XXXII.

Koeln 19 October 1867.

Dear Mister Huet. I am self conscious about the trouble you were willing to give yourself caused by my requests, and I thank you very much. (Also for the f 25 which were properly received.)

From your letter I think I can surmise that you are busy, and for that reason I too will not write much. Only this: I think the dutch papers amusing. They themselves silence me to death, and at the same time they make a kind of boast about it that abroad people are interested in "our" (I protest) literature. With reference to the two million that Myer don't know what to do with (according to Bat. H. B.) there really was something to say about it.

That Myer does not know what to do with the money is comprehensible. I am not allowed to say so publicly, but really there is only one way by which things can be set straight in the Indies, that is to raise me high. Of course, everybody will hold this to be a self interest seeking judgment. I am aware that it's just shyness on my part not to say it publicly because it is to my own interest. But true it is. The entire matter with the Indies lies in control of the chiefs by our officials (as the instructions said and say) I would follow those instructions and suffer penury. Can it be expected that after my example any one will dare to do his duty? No.

That "the person who will be able to control the Regents still has to be born," (Bat. Handelsblad) is untrue. I was able to, and every one shall be able to, as soon as he knows that he will not be punished

for it. Had Duymaer van Twist supported me, instead of, by following the rut, to consider my eccentricity (as that it was in fact: unusual) as insanity, then everything would have been in order long since. (My predecessor had already made a beginning, but was poisoned.) That after my example no one dares, is natural. I cannot blame any one in view of the condition of my family.

But it should not be said that an honest control is impossible. Has one fact been contradicted of the things that I brought to table after a brief observation in my provinces?

It's a pity that I cannot speak about these matters. My earnest conviction that only by placing of the crown on my head the matter can be straightened out, is paralysed by the natural tendency to ascribe my verdict to self interest. O, if I were some one else.... I would tell them! If Duymaer van Twist had done his duty, then all would have been in order long since, as: once more, many wanted to go my way! My controller was an upright man, but he did not have the guts to go forward. Viz, I pray thee, in Loveletters the questions he answered.*

Must I think that people are deaf, blind and dazed that they cannot see the only truth? It does not lie in new Hagueian laws. It's the peaking through the fingers at existing laws, their violation which is at fault.

Sincere greetings from yours truly,

Douwes Dekker.

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*)(The piece in its original condition, the questions and answers by van Hemert (the Verbrugge of Max Havelaar) was on display at the Multatuli exhibition at Amsterdam in 1910.) MDDS.

XXXIII.

Koeln, 12 November 1867.

Dear Mister Huet. Forgive me for appealing once more to your friendliness. Would you be able to inform me concerning the conditions of the offer in today's Courant under the heading: editor? Might that be something for me? I shall be glad to turn out a great deal of work, primarily if through a steady income I can put an end to my wandering.

That I do not write direct to Z. Z. comes from the fear of an unpleasant rebuff. There are many persons who glorify in rebuffing me. If you would probe the terrain, so that I could be assured of not taking such a risk then I'll be glad to write them myself. Perhaps you will consent to give them a hint that I might be inclined to start negotiatiations and.... anyhow, I only wish to know that I do not risk to hit my head most too roughly. Would you do me that favor? Aye, 'tis so necessary for me to find something like that!

After friendly greetings, also to Mrs. Huet, I remain,

Yours truly

Douwes Dekker.

XXXIV.

Koeln, 14 November 1867.

Dear mister Huet. Day before yesterday evening I mailed a note to you with a new request and yesterday I received the revue Britt., as a friendly reply to an old request. It embarrasses me. I did not dare to expect more than that you would be lucky enough to take a glance at

that number. I am deeply appreciative for all the trouble you have been willing to give yourself, and now I am face with the fact that I have already made another request. I do hope the inquiry into that advertisment will not cause you too much trouble. I'm beginning to fear that the publisher Knoop will not be able to tell you very much, so that it will take more than I would wish for. Do forgive me since it's all because of the difficult circumstances in which I find myself.

As for the article in the revue (I constantly carry Byron's comment in mind: "English bards and Scottish reviewers") what shall I say about it? Look here, if I could force my self to turn out such work, then I certainly would deliver twenty sheets a day. What you do not know you simply guess at. A gaping you just fill in with a phrase. When *au bout* from your latin, then just a cliché about liberalism and conservatism (that *in casu* has nothing, nothing at all to do with the matter.) I have not said that the soldiers in the Indies are overpaid. I have said that upon such expeditions there follow such knight-orders, such thankgivings. It is untrue that I make monsters of all those of a higher rank than myself. I demonstrated that the generally prevailing spirit tended to bring along compromising, peeking through the fingers, and that this drags disastrous consequences behind it. It is untrue that I make an ideal of the Javanese (gentle, good people they *are*) I have sketched *one* incident "to show what *may* go on in the hearts of those poor people." (Thusly it states, I think. I have no Havelaar.) Besides, I remember having emphatically protested against the accusation of idolizing. My Saidjah in fact is no exception. The popularity of that

little sketch lies precisely in his (Saidjah's) simplicity. He is militant, he has nothing in particular. The little songs that I let him dream aloud are the natural expression of Javanese sadness. In malay it's very common to dream singing. The style is malay. I first made them in malay and they bear the marks of it. The address to the chiefs too must by and large have been so. Thusly I would speak in malay. As I wrote I paraphrased twice: my memories first *in*, and then *from* the language I spoke. Would I be telling you something from my Indies' career, you would at once discover malayisms, sprouting from my desire to be real. Whoso was unaware of that would think that I either spoke nice or not nice, all in accordance that such a malayism pleased him, although I would have in view neither niceness nor ugliness. What now sounds lovely in the Saidjah-history is indebted to the reality which I transcribed, not to what I made. I an no artist. When I want to doll up something it becomes abhorrible.

And once more, even if people were justified in in holding the very negative drawing of Saidjah as idealization, have I not answered? Do I not say: the question is not whether the Javanese can sing such songs, the question is whether he is ill-used. In Loveletters I submit a list of stolen buffaloes. The correctness of that list must be assailed. There lies the question. Have you the desire to read over that page? (But mark you well, I maintain the exactness of the painting of Saidjah. Only, it has nothing to do with what matters.

Being applauded for scribbling leaves me indifferent, but it does bother me that I am being suspected of lying. Even the name Saidjah is alien to me. The list of stolen buffaloes contains a somewhat similar name. Sadjiah, I believe. Many buffaloes were stolen, many people were driven from their homes, many from among these fled to the Lampongs, in the Lampongs there has been much slaughter and burning of houses, all this is true. Did I have to submit a notarial exact history of all those people? Perhaps there were criminals among them (improbable, since the rather simple characteristic is peaceful apathy until the moment of amok) was I for that reason not allowed to sketch my Saidjah as a peaceful lad? I do not give him a single extra-ordinary characteristic. Even his silence, after he became aware of his tragedy is true. Also that he quite simply sought death. (Many times I've witnessed such a course of Javanese grief.)

Then: "_superieurs blanchis aux service_...." I don't touch the greyness. Some grow grey sooner than others, but this is certain that I had none or perhaps a few superiors during my 32nd, 33d, 34th, 35th year who had as much and varied "work prestige" as I did. But even sans this, every one had his instructions, the greys and the blonds alike. I followed my instructions and the greybeards did not follow theirs. In that way _blanchir_ doesn't amount too much. Is far advanced seniority an extenuating circumstance?

And then, as usual, alas! that shoving the matter aside in order

to talk about a book! The case is: that I, in accordance with my mood as well as the letter of my instructions (no better can be made in The Hague) wanted to do my duty. For that was more courage needed than usual, as my predecessor, who too wanted to do so, was poisoned.

(No longer can I prove that poisoning any more. Well, however, that he made the same claim as I, and that he planned to act the same as I. Also that it was suspected that he was poinsoned.)

That enticed me. Is that peculiarity in my character a crime? Still, it did not entice me enough from using gentle means at first, which I still can prove. Only when those means failed I did.... nothing strange yet, but simply what my instructions prescribed and what, strictly taken, I should have done at once. Upon that I was transferred to a province where things were still worse, and where the resident was the brother in law of the previous resident in Bantam, under whom the Lampong uprising had been.... brought to order. That department was nota bene not vacant, it was made vacant. And even earlier I had stated that I could not serve if I were not allowed to follow my instructions. Could I do anything else but ask for my discharge?

After that I ran around for employment.... no matter how insignificant. I was willing to take a clerical job at merchants' offices. For that I was everywhere "too learned" and a too high standing person for the job. The fact was that no one wanted to indispose the government. I lived.... years long.... yes, how? At last, having been shut out everywhere in the Indies I saw a chance to go to Holland. I sought bread and in the meantime.... ay e, 'tis too long, too long!

The telling of it is painful, and besides I'm not allowed to demand attention from you.

My main grievance always remains, that unlooked for renown-about writing. A hundred times I've pointed out the injustice of the twisting of the subject, but it's no use. A list of all the persons with whom I've been compared would be a curious one. But always they were writers or speakers. Mirabeau was number one (Amssterdam Courant). Sterne, Heine, the writer of the Junish letters, Apulejus (!).... what do I know! And now Chateaubriand! What that gentleman has been about I do not quite know. Of his writing activity I have read a few things, and if he has done nothing more important than that, I decline the honor of all comparison. I am a good human being who made sacrifices for justice. The writing business is a secondary matter. If Klaas Ris the mill hand had learned to spell, he would be a good writer, and any one who is not a good writer I esteem no less if for the rest he is a good human being. I consider writing to be a curse of the past 3, 4 centuries. Everywhere we have gotten tales, sounds, phrases instead of deeds. When I was very young I wanted so much -yes, ambitious I was- accomplish something good. I felt myself -still very religious- something o a partner of god. I talked with him about: business. I took everything as if it concerned me personal. "Is it not a shame, such a mess in the warehouse? " There you have the quintessence of my prayers of that time. I blamed myself for each dirty spot in the universe. Haughtiness? O certainly, ridiculous, insane haughtiness. Still I believe that much beauty would be exhibited if that haughtiness were a little more general, and then it would be less insane.

And now descended to to writing, to quibbling with a review, and to the hope that the unknown editor of the northern courant, will have use for me! And, amusing, if that be so it will be quite difficult for me not to write "floridly". That will be insufferable, I think, that is I shall not be able to say exactly what I mean, as in that lies the floridness. Well, I yet believe that Ris would lose his talent if he learned to spell. The danger is so great that one unlearns the natural utterance of one's meaning! At the congress I got acquainted with mister Gram. I felt sorry for him. He is skinny and pale and I felt how he had chewed his nails in order to fabricate that golden snuff box. I had such a desire to tell him something.... a donnée for a novel....

And your novel?? I trust you are not angry that I fulminate so against writers, you, who are a good writer. O, o, not so very good at that! If only you had talent you would produce more. Blondin walks on the cord, every day, sans prejudice for next week. No, no, if only you were an artist you would soon become rich writing. No doubt with you it must be from the soul, from the well that flows only under certain conditions.

My drama still lies there unfinished. It's no good, and will be no good. In spite that I derive a certain intrigue from a story I read in my youth (by Michel Masson) I cannot put suspense in it. The verses, provided it's I who am speaking, I make easily and well, but the whole I can't make. In the third act the entire intrigue is finished, everybody knows all, no one awaits a denouement. The parterre will get up and say: home early tonight. "Then make it in three acts," you'll say. That too is impossible. I am, and declare

myself incapable.!

But.... the products of the masters in the art too are really quite.... singular. What a vacuum! Vacuum in action as well as in thought. Still, every line of Goethe and of Schiller has become a citation. The psalm composers too need not complain. See for once in the Courant the text of Ter Haar. "The watchmen for the morrow." The vocalist has, provided he was honest, not in the least desired that these words would be used as a cornerstone for a sermon. And -I have looked up the text -since I've bought a bible- it's a repetition. But ter Haar says emphatically "last part" of the cited verse. "See for once, dear people, so theological smart I am that on that small point of that needle I build such a steeple. Not on the entire needle -excuse me- no, once more, on its little point, and so.... "second part". I can get so sad at the idea that careless listeners will tell at home that the profr. preached about the entire verse, and so estimate his architectual ability less high than it deserves! Profr. van der Hoeven has preached about: "beginning from Jerusalem." When that happened I was a child. It still pleases me that even then already I was not quite content with that little trick. I had a strong argument about it with his son who was my playmate.

Aye, I think that ter Haar's family has all that's needed and is with him. I shiver at the thought what I would have to do if it were proposed to me on that condition to say something about.... anything. I fear that I would accept it. And if later I would break off brusquely, it would be a virtue of my temperament

that would utter a drunkenman's truth, not of my character that would succumb under quite too much grief. But then I think, suppose now that each sunday I would add to it: I only do it because I would like to see my wife and children again, do remember that I did not mean what I told there; do not forget that I warned you; do not hold me to be insincere.... it is not true that that steeple stands on that needle....

No matter, the choice has been spared me. With or without steeples I am being left alone. So I must remain honest, even though it's sans honor.

Since August I have occupied myself with the flemish movement. It was a difficult position for me. Basically I had no sympathy for it. But I wanted to make myself believe that I would get heart for it and then I would indeed have been of value to the flemish. It has not come that far. I was unable to deal in the open with the propositions I had to make and the planning I did. So I was limited to the few people with whom I came in contact and -judging the whole by those samples- I must hold the entire business for a shouting match. In clubs, at dinners etc., it poses a human being to carry on such a business. Fatherland, Charles the Fifth, Ghent, cradle, Artevelde, Sporenslag, not degenerated, real dutch this and that.... behold, so many small tile of various colors that only need a little cement to form a small mosaic, what do you say. When I asked them if they would have me.... o yes, with pleasure. The flemish brothers would,... you know the rest.

But when upon that I asked: if I could be guaranteed a very modest existence for as much labor as I could deliver to the best of my ability, the reply was: "that the time was not ripe". Starting a daily paper too was out of the question. "That would be entirely impossible...."

For four long months I spent fruitlessly at those efforts. As a non plus ultra of sacrifice a flemish millionaire advanced me fr. 200 for lectures which I am to hold at Ghent.*

Whether I'll ever be able to get there I do not know, and so the man indeed risks to make a sacrifice to his fiery netherlandism.

If I have written you more than you like to read, it can be quickly laid aside, can it not? Be sincerely greeted with your wife and little Gideon, the Lord's sword. Aye, that word reminds me of the companion of my youth.... 'tis bitter.

t.a.v.

Douwes Dekker.

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*)(Mister Rolin Jaquemyns, currently minister of the king of Siam.)MDDS.

XXXV.

Koeln, 18 November '67.

Dear Mister Huet. Thanks for everything. For taking an interest in the editor-advertisement, for the offer regarding the Revues, and for the f25. Yes, and then for your letter itself.

Yesterday I wrote the entire day to you, and instead of all that writing (indiscreet through extensiveness) I now send you these few lines. Good, I will answer the Revues and so accept your friendly offer.

Yesterday's letter, namely, was one doubting whether it was really good because by refuting I popularize the objections and help Holland to a desired [illegible] "for see the englishman too says so".

The words too and so are two lies. That "so" is not "so" (the Javanese is abused) And "too" is not "too" because Holland has remained silent.

Soit. Then I will at once answer those two lies.

I thank you sincerely for everything. I would like so much to do something for you, but I don't know what.

Friendly greeting to the three of you.

Yours truly,
Douwes Dekker.

The Frisian Courant alas will doubtless need an "ist" or an "an".

XXXI.

Koeln, 19 November '67.

Dear mister Huet. Planning to send the revue, I once more looked it over, and all the reasons that made me doubt yesterday and day before yesterday once more came up within me in full strength. Principally is that I popularize the secondary objections of Mr. Th, L., and give Holland the semblance of a pretext that there has been an answer. They accept the voluting praise of the literature for themselves and argue from the most insignificant remark their right to rebut me. I would be able to count on this a priori, but a posteriori that little Utrecht Courant already has delivered a proof. "Oh well.... our literature.... etc., but it is very clear that Mult. is not blameless either, that englishman (too?) says that he makes all europeans bad and all Javanese

good." Now that is indeed untrue, and before an impartial judge that remark would be abrogated, but I have no impartial judges. Thusly there is much. My defense would be booked on the side of fine literature, and the points on which I defend myself would be charged to my debit as a contribution to the justification of the condition in which I exist.

"Oh well, he suffers penury, but look here, that englishman has said .... this or that.

"How do I know? Have you read the revue?"

"No, but it does state so in Multatuli's latest brochure."

Thusly it will go. Believe me.

And there is more. I have no (or almost no) exhibits. No Havelaar, no Free Labor, no Loveletters and so must plea without a dossier. Each time when I should have to say: that is not stated there, I can neither cite nor give the page. Thusly there are difficulties of which any one in ordinary circumstances cannot form an idea.

And yet it causes me difficulty not to answer! It's enough to make one boil, with those insipid tales. Keeping silent will be difficult for me, even though I find speaking detrimental. O, that I had judges..... but then things would have been different long since.

And there is still a complication-factor in this history. The M. H. is being translated, and I am asked for a preface .

My god, it is preceded by a motto, and a dedication, must there be added more soup in order.... not to be grasped anyhow?!

As that is my main grievance. I cannot write so that I am grasped.

I occupy myself a great deal with mathematics, and imagine I am

capable of writing better books as manual than the existing ones.. But in view of the false notions which I seem to produce, I dare not. When I think I have demonstrated that a is a, I hear that there has been found in it.... well, whatever you will. The pain that this causes me is terrible, and might I commit suicide, it most probably would be in such a mood. Not on the way to his crucifixion (quite sans comparison) but when he exclaimed "Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Christ must have suffered the most. This word contained for me, even as a child his Passion.... not the crucifixion. What is commonly called his "suffering" he has shared with thousands who were put to death?

And many were tortured worse.

I can imagine that not being comprehended drives one crazy, literally crazy. I distrust my saliva in such moments

And now something else, I hope it will be the last indiscretion of that nature, since if I needed help once the giving of which lay within your reach, I would ask for it. No, I have in mind the jovial, treacherous, false indiscretion that writing obtrudes.

When on his question: where did I come from? I told my Eduard: "from mama's belly, o that caused her so much pain.... I cried about it!" he replied: well, then I'll color a nice picture for her." And so he did. It was a landscape, of 3 or 4 for a centime. Under Edu's brush it became blue, red, green and so more and more pretty. Then it was pasted in aeternam rei memoriam onto the cover of the box that had arrived from Nantes with prunes, and which could not have dreamt that some time it would become a sewing box with the multicolored

testimony of childish thankfulness for being born. (Such a child is dumb, viz Job some page: cursed be the day etc.) and at the same time how the pretended pedagogic stumbling block of the generation can be removed in a simple manner. Rousseau? No, I didn't get it from Rousseau, but I read much in the book in which Rousseau read. (I claim that he often read badly.)

--"There is one thing and another on this page that one can very well do without," I hear critic Cd.B. H. say,"and what's become of the indiscretion?" says mister Huet, who is reading this letter.

Well, it pleases me that you long for it. As for my verbiage.... that's my business. For once it pleases me to choose the pasted up prune box as point of departure in order to arrive at a couple of hundred verses from my perished drama which I offer to you and which you may recite to your wife. I think the verses, or a part of them just as frank and pretty as Edu did his multicolored print and -as he- just now I have nothing else. But my merit is greater than his, 1º. because I do not owe you as much as he did his mother; 2º. He colored because he like it, and I dislike neat writing. The hope on acclaim of what's delivered, probably will be equal.

A queen replies to the soft reproof of her mother that on the previous evening she has kept a certain minister of state too long.*

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*)(Here follows in the letter parts from the first act of the drama Vorstenschool (School for Leaders). "Too long? O no! I was not tired!" And from the third act: "What today is called liberal will soon.... onto: "Whoso denies it say: I had no mother."

Now say that I haven't colored a lovely print for your sewing box!

But do not go to the trouble to reply to all this writing. Probably I myself know some of your observations on those verses. All that parliament, no matter how well one says those things, is seldom well placed.... perhaps never, that is: a drama is an unnaturally wrenched thing (the dialogue is empty or sententious, and fundamentally I am not ashamed that I can't make it. Shakespeare too seems to have realized it, whether his productions were good: as drama. Jumps and gapings such as he allowed himself (that lie in the nature of things) are no longer permitted. The art critic (you for instance) demands a comparativelycompleteness of the product. And this is just. Any one who cannot deliver it should stay home. But.... while the comparative completeness does not lie in the nature of things, there also follows from this that a good production must be unnatural. Art demands something rounded of, something compleet, which nature never delivers. One has to look at the earth from far away to find that it is round, and one who is committed to truth is bound to produce minced things. I am very curious for your novel. I think I am honoring you with the confession that I have a bad idea of it. How is it possible for you to imagine anything? True, it may be a reproduction of something you experienced. --And then I'll grasp it very well-- or dreamt it.

Sincere greetings.
Very truy D. D.

Do not take the trouble to reply. It would really grieve me if for my sake you wrote long letters, and I too will not do so again.

XXXVII.

Koeln, 28 November 1867.

Dear mister Huet, I received the two revues and your friendliness confuses me. So much trouble and costs!

And sans that too I am embarrassed. Without the least claim on your help I make use of your time. If I don't write you, or little, then I think of myself as dry against all the trouble which you give yourself for me. When I write more extensively with the intention of being hearty - then I blame myself for giving you long letters to read. "I shall never do it again," I wrote you recently. How shall I manage now?

The trouble and expense that you have caused yourself for my sake to get me those revues, demands acknowledgment.

"The best acknowledgment is that you answer them boldly." Thusly your good intention, because you think it's to my interest.

But I am not sure about that. I am capable of contradicting the scotch reviewer basically. But I think I've shown so much fundamentally, and with what result. That I constantly wrestle with penury, not speaking now of the condition of my wife and children. If not within a short length of time I find means to stay alive for a while (that Frisian courant seems to have bounced off, just as I expected) Then I'll no longer be there to correct the print proofs. And really, no sooner I am dead and stand in no one's way anymore, than it will be seen how little the observations of the revue have to do with the real situation, and how -as ever- the question is shoved aside. That eternal shifting is just what Holland wants

and I render an assist when I answer.

In a certain sense it saddens me that by sending both revues you seem to think that I owe an answer. My god haven't I described plainly enough, declared? Is it possible to stick a pin between the pieces of evidence that I offered D. v. T.?

Those pieces of evidence are not there, you say?*

1º. They appear partly in Max Havelaar and the Loveletters. 2º. Have I ever been awarded the triumph to let them be printed by, for instance to inquire into or doubting their authenticity? Have I not, by remaining unanswered, been silenced to death? (Soon it may be literally true.)

What more must I demonstrate, prove? One fact has been contradicted (and I think correctly). My predecessor did not die the same day, but (I think) the following day.

In this I was wrong. For the rest has: 1º. no one stood up against my claims. 2º. The main thing been admitted.

Is it not imprudent of me to get involved in quibbling with an alien about secondary matters (he too acknowledges the truth of the main thing) offer Holland an opportunity for a semblance of reply, as it is the failure to answer me is the only justified verdict that I have been allowed to acquire?

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*)(Namely not in the printed letter to the G. G. Retd. Duymaer van Twist. To the original letter which Multatuli sent from Brussels to D.v.T. the evidence was included as an appendix.) MDDS.

Nothing is easier for me than to defeat the Englishman. But my conquests cost me dearly. They would come to me again (as has happened) with the request: "Eh, write something like that for me once!" As though I come to plea in order to plea. A leather dealer asked me once to write something for him about the bad preparation of buffalo hides. And être -I am still burned up about it- asked me for a "piece" in which I would establish his right to a reward from a druggist whom he had helped to get a wife.....

That I gain with my writing!

In order to keep alive I wrote to Antwerp regarding getting a lecture date and received no answer. Now I can no longer go there even if they call me.

From Maastricht the word is that I have no choice of jail, and so, arriving there-also to hold a lecture- would have to be sent to Amsterdam. This does not suit me, as I have to pay a fine, and wanted to earn the money for the trip, the lecture would have to precede the arrest. I do want to go to Amsterdam (mostly to see my publisher who for months since has not chosen to answer me) but I don't want to be taken there. But what a lot of tales these are that do not concern you

Greetings to you and your loved ones, from

Yours truly
Douwes Dekker.

Quite by accident I learned of de Pène's discourteous attack.*

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*)(In the Indépendance. Viz: letter LIX to Tine.)

I haven't done the man any harm, why does he beat me? In order to fill a courier. He calls himself "terreneuve". (The entire qualification of my letter to him was for the fun of it.) And I might answer: Mais, monsieur, un terreneuve est un animal bienfaisant qui sauve sans mordre, tandis que vous vous amusez a mordre ceux qui se approchent affectueusement de vous, sans rien sauver du tout. Or something like that.... and more. But to what end?

'Tis not difficult to be more funny or witty than a french chroniqueur (il avoue que sa "tirade" n'est pas de l'or pur.... has the Observateur paid him in nickel?)

Poor me, I have taken it for "or pur"and after Pène's confession to see something from him that he gives for gold.

Besides he does not seem to feel his "tirade" ao impure, since he repeats it in extense for which it was done too with the terreneuve.

It turns out that de Pène is a writer. I feel that this qualification is an opprobium. I would feel very bad if I had ever insulted any one in order to fill a page. My letter to D.v.T. I did not publish before I had waited 2½ years for an answer. I also have asked people to urge him to answer. He said that my letter was so beautifully written.... precisely as the leather dealer and the marriage broker.

And that too would be said following my refutation of the N. British! The Hollanders would have the front besides to pride themselves on their "literary men" who can "take on" an englishman.

* * *

TO C. BUSKEN HUET.*

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*)(I am making a demarcation here since in the letters now following a different subject will prevail. I will also make bold to skip a sentence occasionally in these letters which have no bearing on their publication.)MDDS.

XXXVIII.

Koeln, 1 December 1867.

Dear mister Huet. Thanks for your letter.

Before I continue I must inform you that I cherish some hope (but that happened already so often, and till now in vain) on a change in my circumstances, and I will return to it after replying to your letter.

I hope that your illness is no more serious than once for all the climate brings along. How few months remain during which one cannot say that! Isn't it really unreasonable that the space between cradle and grave is charged to us as a complete life! I, for one, cannot complain but -singular- I fear I sgall have to pay toll as soon as I live a less agitated. Excepting my eyes, I usually feel well. (Once for all I have no desire to correct my sentences. I am well aware that the last one is no good, you man of approximate perfection.)

Action? That queen? Exactly! Such a drama is a talk-fest, where wisdom in words is for sale. That's why it is no good. Where I want to enter action, I become a seeker. I declare myself incapable. All I have for sale is wisdoms while I tell my creation : gut woman, shut up, we know that already! But I consider the diction good.

Be this as it may. It lies there unfinished. I already had written to Maastricht (since that which is ready is sufficient, yes better than a whole. I intended to tell the audience that, and also why I cannot finish it; besides to recite three acts is heavy enough) but see I have written Maastricht off, even though I needed the money very much. I'm waiting for something, and the inferior must give way to the superior.

Translation of Max Havelaar into german, here at Koeln! Behold I, a Koelnerite, who is listed on the city tax rolls for 5 thal.10 sgr., must learn that from you, a Bloemendaler! I was aware of nothing. Once, long ago, I paid a visit to chief editor Ktuse (of the Koelnische Zeitung, MDDS.) He received me..... how shall I say it? I lay claim to psychological knowledge, but have not the slightest gift to judge a person. I have no knowledge of human beings. Kruse received me openly, gutmuthig, "kindly". What more do you expect? Aye, he did not receive me in the person of editor of the Koelnische Zeitung, nor as a polemical personality. An example which you, I hope, will think curious. Since I tried to earn something here, I requested him to arrange within the circle of his friends an evening in which I would recite in french unentgeltlich of course, in order to judge whether I could hold public lectures in that manner. (I want to skip now why I didn't want to do it in german.) In a very polite, friendly note he let me know of being so very sorry that he and his circle didn't understand enough french in order to meet my request. Do not think that there lay a modestly dressed refusal in this. No. I visited him afterwards in his very respectable domestic surroundings, and he considered together with his wife, in my presence, very calmly again, the objections to my proposal.

She was quite in agreement with him, and I perceived clearly, that he had told the plain trüth. Do you have a notion now of such lack of cosmopolitanism in his position?

After that I have not at all in contact with the Koelnische, and now I hear from you that Grieben wants to translate the M.H.! And that in serial form! That would be a pity. As a serial it would look foolish, I think. Wine -or vinegar if you will- by teaspoons! It will be ungenieszbar! But what a great writer I am....that's for certain....World stirred, and the world makes itself ridiculous as it delivers the returning proof that I am unable thusly to write that I will be -even approximately- comprehended. In the Indies free labor.... I haven't thought about it! In Holland anarchy, mobocracy etc.... of that I think even less! Even were I a born yonker, then I could not dislike the plebs more, and even a certain type of burgher. Still "they" have been able to draw this from my writings. This priority certainly may be expected that a writer possesses: that he be comprehensible, may it not? I myself have said, "a lawgiver (writer, apostle, etc.) has no right to be wrongly comprehended," and by that I stand. I say this too of so called genius-ness. Whoso is unable to force acknowledgment that he is a genius (never mind now its definition) is not one! etc. But you know this as well as I do.

Your "Idea": repetition is an indispensible ingredient of any apostelate I find pointed, yet true. I was indeed aware of it, but I had seen the truth it contains only of the bitter side, namely: that a lie turns into truth, or makes itself count as such through

repetition. (Viz my parable of Haasan and Auled.) Then the doctrine that some one who seeks truth must make that tactic his own, I have not applied. That's a mistake. But.... but.... it's so boring! And, completely admitting the correctness of your proverb, I must say that probably the practice of it would be.... or shall be heavy.

'Twill be news to me whether Grieben will ask me for notes, and the re-instatement of the arbitrarily caused.... of the damnable periods instead of names by Van Lennep! How cowardly, eh? That has done much damage. It has something disguised in it, something like fear, something false.

The world is stirred, I said, not by my rel. perfection I mean, but by that book. Behold.... between Koeln and Paris their lies the road to.... Edinburgh, where too a translation is in the Press, and that by Edmonstone & Douglas, publishers of N. B. review. Those gentlemen asked me for a "preface" and notes. Notes I gave. Preface not. But I promise an epilogue. And I am wondering how that will come out, whether I can see some good in it? That now must the government decide. C'est à prendre ou à laisser.

Upon that, namely, rests my hope that I shall get my wife and children back, and that's why I am somewhat nervous! I am in negotiation about it very seriously.

Indeed, a little sanguin -but still not sans ground- I thought I could go to The Hague as early as three days ago. Well, they are a bit slow -they don't have a wife who coughs up blood and needs rest- but the negotiation continues, and.... I have hope! Be so kind not to say a word to any one. It must not become an event before it's ready.

Before the outcome I write nothing. Neither prefaces nor refutations. Even that bad de Pène Independance of Sunday 8 (dec) will not get a box on the ear, which I could easily give him. I wait. And if I succeed I will at the first opportunity take a jaunt to Bloemendaal to tell you one thing and another and to thank you verbally for your loyal assistance. I hope to be allowed to maintain my little bulletin for the Haarlemmer, even if I' d get to be a millionaire or whatever. It has given me such support! And besides, even if I do succeed, even then I shall remain poor for a long time, since I have an enorm amount to pay. But that's nothing, there would be bread and rest for the future. I have wandered for twelve years now. O, how poignant would be the book which I could write about it if I were a writer and the public were worthy of such a book. I hope not to try it.

There you have all kinds of stories for your "free hours". Pleasant!

You have really done me a great favor by the (in Holland) courageous admittance that I seemed to know what I was doing. That admission moved me, and I hope to justify your judgment. Correct it is. I am no madcap. My disdain to build on the highway in Reviews was connected with the possibility of taking part, differently, better prepared for the struggle. I confess that chance is cooperating for 3/4 part, since, even though I did foresee disturbance in the machine of state, I did not foresee that in The Hague "they" would have so soon, and in that measure, stand in need of something different, something else that I can deliver, or in which I could render assistance. That "they" will try to get me as cheaply as they can, with a perhaps premeditated plan to "ditch" me

as soon as everything is rolling again, I expect. But never mind that. Whoso lives then, let them take care. I have written to The Hague that my wife is ailing, that my children need my supervision, so speed is demanded. If my wife succumbs it will be too late. Also, I concede nothing. The little word "I" is followed onto boredom by "who has done his duty". Sometimes with the anti-thesis of "they, you or he.... who did not do their duty," etc.

I'm sitting here 3 days already thinking how I could circulate your article in den Nederland in the best possible manner. My copy was stoeln at Ghent. But that's not the worst part. It should not have been placed alongside of Mr. Gramm's snuffbox, and it is of great disadvantage to me that you were not sent any extra copies. The entire article is important to me, even sans the final remark.

Somewhere in a letter to the administration I read that it is so strange that I am so continuously ignored, since I, at the time of the raising of the remuneration to the Chiefs.... etc. Well, to add an appui I would have liked to have your article. What would it cost, and how much time would it take to print those extra copies/ Distributed separately (Huet about Multatuli) it would cover the publisher's expense. Of that I am convinced. Will you look into it?

Saturday evening.

Aye, I've been dosing in front of the stove and taken it into my head that I already hoped countless times, but always in vain. Will it be so again? I think I can perceive that they are not indifferent to the postscript of the Scottish issue. I am asked if I won't

combat the *kultuur system*. I replied that I could not grasp how they came to that idea, as I never was against that system but indeed have written against mendacious free-labor, that the kultuur-system is a beautiful institution (a miniature catholicism which I think so beautiful too) that only within the circle of my responsibility, and in accordance with my instructions had opposed far gone abuses (that incidentally, however, had nothing to do either with free-labor, or with the kultuur-system, etc.

On the 26th november I wrote what in my view had to be done; that I had done so earlier, 3, 4 years ago already, but then without result. This time, wonder over wonder, it seems that my writing had drawn attention, at least I got a polite answer. *La mouche et le coche?* Precisely, or rather: precisely-not, since it was I who cited the fable and added: I am no *mouche*! Comical, isn't it? Also I said that this allusion did not apply here, since in the fable there was talk of a cart that went uphill.

But notwithstanding all of that, I am still far from ready. I forfeited the lecture at Maastricht just when I needed it. In The Hague too I will not apply for an *arrhes*, in order not to tie myself up; and they from their side are unable to grasp , or think of it that one may be in need of what to them seems small. I wrote, though, that if they expect me to come there, they will have to send me money. And too, that my jail sentence must be vacated. Well, I think that will all be taken care of.

Will you keep well in mind that all what I wrote you regarding those Hagueian negotiations must remain secret? Also sans secondary matters it remains a question if I can come back, but if the news gets out before its time, I certainly won't succeed.

Sincere greetings to you and your family, truly yours,

Douwes Dekker.

XXXIX.*

*)(From here on we can include letters that were lacking in the first issue. Mr. Gideon Busken Huet found them only later among the papers of his father and published them in de Gids of 1910. The notes under the paragraphs are by mr. G. Busken Huet.) MDDS.

Koeln, 15 December 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet!

Sincere thanks for everything. I just got a note from van Helden, so from him too I hear how loyally you are assisting me. The 2 Nederlanden I have received, as well as the previous shipments.

Hoping it will interest you I hereby inform you that my negotiations continue. They are much intent on discretion, and even ask me to burn the letters I receive. Whether that secrecy is necessary I do not know. But I must go along with it.

In the first place they don't want to see me imprisoned and that history is already being taken care of. When that's finished I shall receive a call to come to The Hague, and they will even send me the money needed for the trip as well as to settle a few details here.

The will is there, but they have a hard time getting out of their rut. I, namely had told them: let that imprisonment remain sub rosa. The I will settle that later. No, it had to go in accordance with form.

And- the Board of Ministers should remain in order to help me, they say. I explained, so far onto boredom, that this is not essential, that just by (as is still possible) resignation, my reinstatement would be a parthian arrow- whether they relish this idea I do not know.

Repeatedly I get decrarations of good will "if they stay one," but they do not answer to the "arrow".

Be this as it may, I have hope.

If only my dear wife does not succumb. She is ailing badly, and I am very much worried. That school is about to go bankrupt. And she has volunteered to keep things going. She complains about the cold weather and lack of comfort. The people carry her on their hands, but there is poverty, and instead of being paid it's just she who keeps things going as well as she can.

I had such a desire to send you her letters. Could you give mr. P. a hint, and not delay it in godsname, just now, then do so.

If there did not exist any hope of re-instatement I would not dare to write this, but now it agitates me terribly that my wife might succumb before I succeed.*

---

*) This letter lacks a signature, probably due to the last page being lost.

XL.

Koeln, 18 Dec. 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet. Your letter has quite unhinged me. Singular how the questions you pose agree with my mood, or rather with the crisis in which I find myself and- in which the Administration finds itself. Many big things are imminent, I feel it.

The emotions which your letter arouses in me are many. Joy that you are being released from that bondage. Pro and con regarding your future in the Indies, oh, a variety!

But your questions!

Your program? I am convinced that we would compliment each other. The past few days I was writing a piece I intended to be a memoir (not I'm being asked to turn it into a brochure, good. So you'll see it in print), in it you'll find what I hold to be the truth in the Col. question of the day, and that agrees, I believe, quite well with your program.

But.... to You I say that I will not and cannot give all the truth in that piece. That I do not choose to do, neither as publicist, nor as Multatuli. I have an aim in life, and will not deviate from it. Before I can tell You that other, you would have to read that piece(theme: The Netherlands cannot keep Jave, exept by the old system, etc. etc. In one word I wish to talk to You. Within a few days, yes any day now, I expect the invitation to come to The Hague. (They are too hidebound to lift the jail sentence sans consideration and advice of the Off.of Justice in Amstd. Not because they want to be guided by it, but they don't want to break a form; dumb.) As soon as I get to The Hague I want to pay You a visit, provided there'll be still time then.

Men in the Netherlands who will interest themselves for your program? I think yes. This approximately has as even a chance as that they will approve of my brochure, and I'm convinced of that, at least it was supposed to be wired (had not the telegraph wire gone out of order) "Continuez et achevez." That they wrote me from the Chamber. It seems they want to see my piece to influence the elections. And that is good. But they do not know everything about me and I will tell it to You..

That unfortunate personal interest forces me at this moment-- no, no personal interest. Surely I must live in order to do something else!

Quite fortunately that all that is required of me agrees exactly with my ideas. --That again is not quite true. The relation is so: I defend (as freethinker) catholicism, the orthodox one, against the moderns. "Sit ut est, aut non sit." Now I demonstrate in favor of one esse against the different esse, and although I keep the possibility of non esse for myself, or at least partially (here and there it shines through). Yes, I should have a chance to speak to you. I long for telling you the whole truth. It oppresses me.

As soon as I reach The Hague then I will get you and me --how shall I put it- then shall I get You -by mutual consent- in touch with the focus of conservatism, which too must accept that part of your program where you speak of reformations. If they wont do that then they will not get me either. "Reformation" not necessarily in system (o no!) but in application and execution. The conservatives have committed more evil than the "liberals", Tetzel more than Luther etc. Reformation within the Church of no Church, but no opposed church sans foundation.

Now I want so much to know the time in which you must give a definite answer? O, if only I had known about it beforehand, I would have asked you to get a month delay. Is that still possible?

And something else, have you any certainty que l'on (is your on solide?) qu'on ne vous plantera pas là?

That in that case too in Batavia, would come out allright after a little difficulty, I am convinced. But you're not going there to seek difficulties.

Aye, how quickly your little boy will speak malay!

There prevails in my surroundings s omething very singular at this moment! I tell you that not a day passes that I do not receive agitating letters nearly all ending up at one point, sans being related to each other. I deceive myself in the event there is nothing brewing.

Your letter -no matter how important it is to you -in my view it has more importance than you could have foreseen. To me it is an indication of the consolidation or.... dissolution which we face. 5, 6 days ago I also received an invitation to cooperate with a paper (at Samarang.

Well, this is nothing in particular, but the concurrence! To that publisher as well as the Scottish book dearlers who ask me for contributions, I replied: I want a month postponement. During that month it must be decided if I -well, that's just what I wanted to deal with verbally.

There is yet another singular side to the news that you gave me. For years since I've contemplated You being in the Indies. I visioned what You were doing there, and as I thought about certain rules, you played a great role in my thoughts. Can it be called superstition that now, just as I am so busy after such long idleness- your imminent transfer stirs me so? No, it's not superstition. I can explain it.

Now my question is: 1º Is a postponement of decision opossible? If so, how long?

2º. Can I write about the proposition made You, about your probable acceptance, to a high-placed person, with the proposal to introduce You to him? I am convinced that he would appreciate talking with You. He must be interested in seeing You.

Is it possible to write such a Courant in the Indies (that is, in accordance with your program?) This is a question of conscience. What is the possibility here? Are you inquiring if it can exist financially? Those who offer you f1000 monthly must think so if they are financially sound. Over all, the unripe, immature establishments as those of.... the Javanese capitals, are poorly served with sharp, piquant opposition, (the easiest kind of writing) that I see, for instance in 10 issues of the Samarang Courant, sent me "to get acquainted".

Follow a course? I am not speaking now of your talent and conscience, but of possibility to succeed as undertaking. --See, that will be difficult! Your task will be the heaviest there is, while You would want to say the truth conscientiously, and you might fall short in willingness with the first johnny come lately who would engage in systematic opposition.

I imagine that a.... bounder for once had indeed something to complain about, and wanted to promote a personal grievance to principle (as usual) then I cannot bear the idea that you, still Netherlander, before long "greenhorn" , and for a long time, perhaps ever, Batavian, apparently would fail with some one who in general insight, talent and humanity, stood far below You. I can foresee this. In my imaginations of a certain future I

already had thought of means to arm You against that.) However, at least you could handle the Batavian lawyers who in regard to Indies' affairs who without damage have remained in the Netherlands, yes.... with benefit.

I'm enclosing a few cladnotes of the piece at which I am still busy. I send them _au fur et à mesure_ of being finished. To these I have added some things. You can see the topic of it, about which it runs. But it contains a complete chess game. Since I am willing to help in what I hold to be true, but they from their side must then make much repairs. If you ask me whether they will truly do so? I guess _no_! And then--

I will ask your advice before I approach Enschede & Zoon. It's quite allright with me that you advise me to wait awhile in this crisis of my life I would not know what to hunt for. Before Nov. 27 I would have accepted any work for whatever pay. Now I hope I can be a little more choosy. So that too waits for the outcome of my interest in The Hague. Still it would be hard for me to leave unused the _possibility_ of a little or big improvement in my position, caused by your leaving, at the prospect that I might succeed elsewhere in getting my family back.

But according to some of your remarks I do not believe that the messrs. E & Z would be able to use me. --So, fortunately, I can wait.

Does the change please your wife? --Aye, wished I could go along. Who knows!

Many thanks for the manner in which you re-issued your "Encouragement"* and also for the f25. It will be a sad feeling for me henceforth to receive the money from some one else.

Very, very, earnest greetings. Let meknow soon whether I can tell of your move to that one person?

Very truly yours,

Douwes Dekker.

I am angry with myself for being suspicious. Continually I imagine that they try to use me for the impending elections, in order either to get rid of me, or place me somewhere as cheaply as they can.

Each day I expect an invitation to come over. In the event you wire me yes, that will indicate that I can use your name.

---

*)(Under this title B. H. had written his article about Multatuli's "One thing and another in reference to J. Bosscha's Prussia and the Netherlands"; later it appeared as a brochure at van Helden's under the title: "Multatuli".

XLI.

Koeln, 21 Dec. 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet. Only at 10.30 this morning did I receive your letter of night before last. For that reason a telegram would have been good as then you could have made use of your Sunday. That I would have put to work. Now, however, I have (sans mentioning a day) properly asked admittance for You, and even suggested that You be sent -circumventing me- a request to pay a visit there. Among other things I wrote:

"mister Huet is a conscientious man who could not be moved to accept an improvement in his social position at the expense of his convictions.

"I need not point out to Your Exc., to the great influence that one of his talent would cast into the scales. He is more than an adolescent contra the lawyers' tales of the 'greenhorns' in the capitals who edit the various papers.

"As he did me the honor to ask what I felt (of course not to follow it unconditionally, but as a guideline for consideration, etc.) I have briefly informed him of my opinion of Indies' matters, that is: *Restoration of order*; *Rectivication of past erros within the framework of the system, etc.*"

> (Note for You. *Voilà le hic*. They are willing to see Luther opposed, but they baulk at touching Tetzel. Insist upon it at The Hague and if you please, impress upon them, -a ye, I don't have to tell you anything about that. If your interrogator says that at the moment he has no influence -yes, because of old age, fatigue *etc.*, does not desire to have influence- then he fibs a little.
>
> If it were true he would not hvae given You an audience.)

Further I write:

"His earnest desire is to do what's right, and since Your Excell. will that too, etc."

Douceur with rank of admonition.

I hope and hope that You will be invited straightforward. That would make it evident to me that they have listened and a *bonne augure* for the success of other of my hints.

I await with pain the annulment of my sentence. A comical Verhältnisz. Imagine a political redeemer who, before he can function etc.

In haste. Sincere greetings.

t. a. v.

D. D.

Something else yet. If you have time then pay a visit to good old Mr. Delbaere, judge at Leyden.

For ten years he was a lawyer at Samarang. In the event that you talk with him for an hour or so (even if you would think that the discours was of no importance, as I foresee) then I will inform you of an observation that will make it important après coup. But I can tell it now: Ask him once what people in the capitals of the Indies what they know about government affairs? He is candid and probably will admit that he learned from Max Havelaar for the first time how things were constituted. I do not say this in order to praise that book, but to bring out how nul and void were the opinions of the liberalizing Europeans at the capitals.

You need no introduction. But if you care to, tell him, along with my greetings, that I recommend You!

He is also the friend of Herman Van der Hoeven at Batavia.*

(So am I.)

At Batavia too you need no introduction. Otherwise I will write V. d. H. I would not like to see you stop at an inn. That is for the expense, but not only for that. One needs etwas Fingerweising at first.

---

*)(H. A. Amorie van der Hoeven, then employed as a journalist in Java.

Can I write him about You?

He is -although a lawyer and Batavian- a fine, intelligent chap.

I am asking the Hague to give You my brochure in order to get Your verdict. You are aware that I am working on something like that, but not in what relation. Also keep mum please, of the fragment I sent you.

XLII.

Koeln, 24 Dec. 1867.

Dear Mr. Huet. I have your letter of yesterday. Kind thanks for your good wishes. Sympathy is a too lukewarm word for what I would like to do for you. I have done nothing and really can do nothing but what pleases at least myself as well as You. But this is true, if it gave me no joy, and yet could be of pleasure to You, I would do it too.

Now I ask You kindly to send enclosed letter by Landmail. I have no confidence in the landmail knowledge of the local post office and think it is important that this brilliant piece leave with the first accommodation. It might be, even if you went by boat (which I would regret and which I don't think is economical: It costs you two months' salary, plus the boredom of the sea voyage, plus the odor of the ship's store room and the rest, now I would that we could still get an answer before you leave. I wished that You, when stepping aboard, knew that you would be well received there. V. d. H. certainly will ask you to lodge with him a while. He is very hearty and robust. When the time comes I will take care that he is aware of Your arrival so that he can receive you at once. Then you are en pays de connaissance.

Let Your lovely wife not take any illusions into her head. The Indies are a good country. That one misses certain things is true, but one has much there that is lacking here. For my wife, a Hollander too, leaving for the Indies would be a tidings of joy. Listen --leaving is a but.... I justify nothing. I don't give a pin for writing.

No doubt You'll buy a booklet of low Malay? or better -since that is from the nature of things too heavy, then You will learn more during the first week than is necessary- I will send you a small list of the tongue that will suit you right away, and no more. Do you want to become wiser, that can later. Perhaps You'll get interested inMalay literature -a thankless work. It has nothing in common with every day Batavian.

And that You can really do without since V. d. H. will receive you. He will spare you and the Mrs. any and all difficulties. Of that I am convinced. He is aware that Your Gideon comes along. That's true, isn't it? I'm always afraid of a "European upbringing" a long distance from the parents.

Mister R. informed me that he has written you, and also that he had thought of the Christmas Days might suit you best. He is indeed lovely toward me, and I have a feeling of appreciation for him. I am obsessed by the thought that I might one time vacation with You at Batavia with my entire family. I assure you I wouldn't even ask if any one were home. Yes, I think I will again land in the Indies, and with pleasure!

My wife becomes emotional when she thinks of Batavia. You will be appreciated, that I do not doubt. Well, that feeling is pleasing and helps you overcome much that otherwise would not suit you.

Let the Mrs. not make too many clothes. I've nearly always heard complains about fashion. Unfinished white material (dun dun) might be good, although sometimes it is cheaper at Batavia too, than here. (On an overstocked market. But you cannot count on that.) When, however, You go by Landmail, as I hope, and want to prevent psying extra freight for your goods, I will speak to you beforehand and tell you then what the demand is.

Such a Landmail voyage is sublime, I think. Very interesting.

I am jealous of You being about to see Batavia. And I imagine how you'll be received, and be content! Mostly when one arrives aboard a sailing vessel, then the crossing is very pleasing. Would You figure out whether V. d. H. still can answer before you leave here? Although I'm not in need of his answer.

Sincere greetings from

Yours truly,

Douwes Dekker.

Mr. R. will give you what I wrote. He said "twas too long". My answer: all people with taste will say so, and I live in fear already of mister Huet. But Mr. Public is not a person of taste and I am a little full.

From fear of indelicacy vis à vis van Dorp* I do not write about the reason for your coming. And I say only: that you will most probably come. I think he will be pleased.

If, as I think, postage is not obligated, then do not attach postage. He would think it strange.

---

*) Publisher of the Java Bode.

XLIII.

Koeln, 27 December 1867.

Dear Mister Huet. Thanks for your letter! Peremptory sentences? Here is one. That piece is good. Not from a viewpoint of writing, but with an eye on my rather complicated goal. Which I hope to explain to you verbally

31 December evening.

Thusly I was prepared day before yesterday to answer your letter of 27. I am disturbed. And now I am writing you about quite something else than I had intended when I began. In the relation with Mr. R. there came among the program, among other things, that he, as soon as he could, would enable me to go to Holland. For that as well as the sentense-history, money was required. This he offered me (and twice sent me something with which I kept going.) In accordance with a letter I received 8 days ago.I relied on it that before the 31st I would receive what was needed in order to move.

Till this moment, late 31 December, I haven't received a thing. My waiting yesterday and today was painful.

You said E & Z dislike to give advances. Well! But can you advance me the f25 which otherwise I should receive after January 15? You can understand how upset I am. Lately I was thinking about quite other things than money for room rent. Why R. has not answered I do not know. He offered me money, I answered: "Yes, and please, before the end of the month", and now I hear nothing. That silence mystifies me. I am very upset.

Hearty greetings.

Yours truly,
Douwes Dekker.

XLIV.

Koeln 3 January 1868.
Evening.

Dear Mister Huet. I wrote you New Year's eve, requesting you to send me the f25 in advance for January 15 and received no answer. A letter was mailed by R. with f200 enclosed that apparently has gone astray. Through which my condition is terrible. I guess that the f25 too is gone as you certainly would have answered.

And a letter just received from Holland has been opened on its side with a fingernail and torn through the envelope besides and one layer of paper. The scratched open Λ apparently was lifted for looking inside. There was no money in it. I have an infamous letter from R. about this matter. He comes very close to asserting that... etc. He does not outright say so, of course, but such is his tone. So grasp my reaction.

For pete's sake let me know whether and when you replied to me. And from which post office (Haarlem or Bloemendaal). I need these facts in order to figure through the co-incidence with the torn open letter whether it was committed one one coach, that is, by the same clerk on duty. That co-incidence can shed light.

It has shot me to pieces.

If you want to remain my friend you cannot talk to R. in a friendly way until he takes back his intolerable letter of yesterday, or admits that he was out of order because he was in a bad humor. 'Tis infamous.

Hearty greetings,

t.a.v.

Douwes Dekker.

Would it be possible for you to find out whether a letter from [illegible] Haarlem is routed by Hagueian coach? The information can be had at

the post office. For pete's sake realize the importance of the matter because of R's tone! It would be worth thousands to track it. At first I suspected the delivery clerk here, but that tearing open must have taken place indoors, then the suspicion becomes rife that it has been done by the same thief who under my address found f200. That sounds alluring.

Now I combine:

1º, the letter from R. mailed from The Hague with f200.

2º the delay of your reply to my letter of the 31st.

3º that tearing open of a letter from The Hague (without money and not from R.) which I received today.

4º the intact receipt of fr.100 which I got from Maastricht (so not a dutch route..)

I write you in such detail in order to induce you to an exact and speedy report. I have the deepest interest in the matter being revealed. What I go through because of it is beyond words. 'Tis to weep the way that matter got a hold of me.

My mailing address is temporarily St.Paul, but telegrams must be addressed Breitestrasse 123.

Would you wire me whether, where and at what hour you have sent me money and how much? By combining it I might gain light and put R. in his place. I feel miserably as a result of this terrible incident.

I'M not replying to R. immediately. Tomorrow morning he'll get the evidence of my investigations through mail and police. If he does not voluntarily write differently, then I shall have to sent him a curt reply.

Is it not a fatality?

For heaven's sake answer me!

XLV.

Koeln 8 January 68. Ry. St. 1.45.

Dear Mister Huet. I receive your letter of 6 January and see that the f25 are gone.

I feel as if to despair. I sit by grace. Within a few days my little belongings, two trunks loaded with papers and books, and little desk are to be publicly sold for city taxes. And I will have to vacate my room. R. conducts himself infamously.

I still have not told him my opinion, but in the long run I can't keep still. During the negotiations with him I declined and neglected everything, Lectures, my drama, the offer from Locomotief (through Noman) who said"that it was up to me to state the conditions."

Briefly, I depended on R.'s help. In a letter prior to the lost one, he said: "I loan it to you, you will, I hope, be able to return it from your surplus."

And, ogod, That I wrote so happily to my wife! I haven't had the courage yet to tell her about what happened. In her situation it approximates manslaughter.

I have been unable to subscribe to the Koelnische, so that I don't know how to get my little bulletin. I will try a coffee shop but for that too I shall have to borrow a thaler at the shop where I usually buy cigars (address Bergrath) I am shrinking from it, not knowing when I can return it.

You are completely in the clear with the sending, I myself would not have acted otherwise than in the usual way that always went well. And mark you, I mailed my request before I knew about

the £200. Otherwise I would have said to register it, since the thief was aware of my address.

I have made up a way to discover the thief. But situated as I am, I can't do a thing, not being certain of one day. *

---

*) This letter is very protracted, nothing but complaints, calculations of postage and deliveries that are no longer of importance. Letter XLVI too I have abbreviated. All letters to Dekker had to be delivered to mr. Bergrath.
MDDS.

XLVI.

Koeln 13 January 1868.

XLVI.

Koeln 13 January 1868.

Dear mister Huet. A few days ago I received your two letters of Wednesday evening and Thursday.

I could not reply immediately due to a sprained thumb, which still gives me trouble. I fell down in the street from exhaustion.

Yes, the £200 and the £25 both were traveling on the same friday. That and still some more points in one direction.

And now something very peculiar. Pay close attention. It sounds like a tale.

About a week ago I requested Nahuys to mail a letter every day from The Hague with a simulated bank address: E. D. D. Breitestrasse 123, and also (address Bergrath) advise me each time.(You comprehend that the letters addressed E. D. D. were delivered at Bergrath's)

The next day I received from Frau Bergrath.... one letter, containing among other things:

"together with this letter I am sending the decoy. I've put three seals on it, etc."

That decoy did not arrive. From the advice-letter I tore off a corner (envelope and letter both) which I gave to Frau Bergrath to keep as a token that I received that letter only.

Then to the post office. As usual I had to return 3 to 4 times before I got to the director. (Those gents haad from 22 December to 6 January inclusive, in fifteen days seven holidays. The obstacle caused by this in my present investigation was terrible. Those holidays were three sundays, two christmas days, new year and the three wise men!).

No matter. About four hours after receiving the advice-letter I could speak to the director. (The man looks at me as though I am crazy, that I feel. Besides I had a severe argument with him about his bureaucratic indolence. He threatened me with a suit for insult while in service. So be it! Rochussen has much to account for. It's all his fault. Not because of the loss of that money, but through the miserable manner in which he acted afterward. That I must so pursue the matter is a result of R.'s words: "it surprises me that the letter did not arrive!"

Well then, at last I contacted the director. "I believe I'm on the trail, I exclaimed, "that is a dumb thief who allows himself to be caught so soon!" (The director was aware of my actions.)

He too wondered and said that similar attempts had been by them, but always without result.... and now so quickly! I felt that his wondering was well founded and was an..... insult. It contained doubt.

"I have already written to my correspondent at The Hague that his decoy has not arrived. Look, here is the marked advice-letter. Nahuys at The Hague must testify to having sent the decoy at the same time with this one and Frau Bergrath that this one arrived by itself."

I said this a little provocatively because his attitude did not please me. While we talked we agreed to call a carrier. This one remarked "but.... now there is a letter for the gentleman, a registered one."

I thought: from Rochussen and requested to receive it there.

The carrier went for it and handed it to me: the decoy from Nahuys, registered.

I almost died. Just because of my position with the director I didn't want to say how dumb my correspondent was. After opening it, seeing what it was, I put it silently into my pocket, in confusion slunk off and was disgusted with Nahuys.

I wrote to him furiously but....

Nahuys had not registered the letter. That had been done at the post office. Below the stamp it states: "registered" with large letters: by way of precaution. The advice-letter was stamped: 7 January 12.4, the registered one four hours later (mailed at the same time by Nahuys.

Both envelopes are now with R.

I requested him R., to send some one to the post office with my card: compliments and thanks for the helpfulness. Herewith the advanced 10 cts. for the registration."

I'm requesting R. to inform me what answer the person brings. Either the precautious one accepts the thanks and the 10 cts., and then I will investigate later wht that unknown man, damaging the postal responsibility, so uncalled for looks after my interest. Or.... no one has done it, and then the thief of the f200 has been at work at that hour the 7th January in the office at The Hague.

It's fortunate that this incident is so demonstrable. I have made mention of Nahuys to R. He can call him and compare his testimony with the two envelopes.

What, after all, concerns my relation with R. I'm groping in the dark. I surmise that he feels ashamed(and so is angry) I have overwhelmed him with letters about the matter. Of course! Instead of saying "well that's too bad, I will help you at once. There is something else to do than chasing that miserable f200," he is wondering why that letter has not arrived and wrote: "inquire and keep me informed!"

Good! I have inquired! I have allowed police and mail people to insult me. From mornings till evenings I walked with torn shoes in the snow. The money from which I should have eaten I spent on telegrams and postage, and on the 8th he wrote very flatly "I do not believe that you will succeed in your efforts."

I replied: Perhaps not now, because I cannot get properly get around; but if I were Minister, I would not be content with such criminality. I also assume, provided I can get carte blanche, to put an end to it once for all. But if, in my exhausted condition, I do not succeed, no one need to wonder.

This afternoon I will try to look into a few papers for the Haarlemmer.

Greetings to you and the mrs. from

truly yours,

Douwes Dekker.

XLVII.

Koeln 8 Febr. 1868.

Dear Mister Huet!

Last evening I received your (haste) note of 5 february.

Again there must have been letters lost, as your previous one was of 12 January, and since that time I learned from others a few things about you which I could not believe that you would not let me sans tidings if something happened in connection with the matters about which we corresponded and in which I, as I believe, in setting aside my own interests, did assist you to the best of my ability.

Will you be so kind to inform me that between 12 January and 5 Fenruary you did not write me?

t. a. v.

Douwes Dekker.

I've been informed that one of the causes (among others) why my affairs -the affairs on which the life of my wife depends!- go so badly, is due to my contact with you! I think I have not deserved this, and so do not believe it. But your silence is depressing. I am hoping that there are letters gone astray. That is the least sad explanation.

XLVIII.

Koeln 12 february 1868.

Dear Mister Huet. I have indeed written you after the few lines in an envelope, and that very extensively, and so on your "acknowledge that this is strong", I simply reply: no!

But even suppose I had not written, was I not entitled to be kept aware of the course of events at The Hague? After a short initial word dated 27 December, I learned *nothing*. With pain I awaited news in order to continue the started correspondence about the course to be taken in regard to the Indies. When you did me the honor to ask me how I felt about it, I got ready to satisfy you, and considered it a useful introduction (*as introduction only*) that you spoke to R. and the Minister.

Not because *they* would tell the truth, but to discuss with you what they have said, and to warn you against a great deal of untruth. It really was an introduction in order to comply with your request. No more. Heaven save me that in order to supply some one with information of what's going on, I would refer him to a G. G. Ret$^{\underline{d}}$, or a late-resident who was criminally involved when I did my duty, and is now a minister. Neither R. nor H. will have the gall to face me -in person- Well, never mind that!

Now, beyond the introduction you did not let it go. As ever I still await news about your visit of.... 26 December. That you were at R., I know. That later on you would again go to The Hague you wrote me also. I appeal to your loyalty in order to judge whether yes or no I had any moral right to learn something about what was talked about? I let it undecided what interest I had in it, just to point out how grievous it was to be shut out at a moment that one applies oneself with heart and soul to do a friend a service, (not in the way of *appointments or the like* of which I

know nothing) no, by getting you informed, as well as I could, on how matters in the Indies stand. As it was this you asked me, and I took it very *à coeur*.

Of *appointments*, or attempts toward them, I heard from *others* (*among them R.*) and could not make a thing of it

I ask you explicitly whether your silence is amicably?

Suppose I did not write (I wrote, and extensively!) is immaterial since I awaited word from you first.

En attendant I occupied myself making notes that might enable you to decline all assistance at Batavia, and even- I already began a booklet on Malay words for Mrs. Huet. I took all so seriously that I wrote about linens and the respectability of wearing *kabaais*.

"Do you blame me for this?" You cannot play with words. This, your question, puts me in a bad light -and so is out of place. It's not *that* which I take ill- on the contrary I was full of appreciation that at last I could do something for you, but I take it ill that you so nonchalantly ignored me, being that I was so sincere and --do not misconstrue- as in the realm of your future I think I mean a little more than the messrs. R. and H.

R. wrote me a mong other things that he had recommended me to you for the H. C.* I took that very ill of him.

He poses also as *your* protector, and says that you are"so content" with with it all. Of that too I grasped nothing. Your contentment could only be the result of of your succeeding in your desire to be at home in Indies' affairs. That should have come from me and not from R. And since you cut me off I can fulfill neither my, nor your

own, earlier expressed desire. That this contentment lay in connection with other things I heard only from others, whom I did not believe. I wrote to my wife: "It can not be true!"

Lies told by R. newspaper scribbling wrongly read, dispatches from others (one from The Hague, another from Maastricht) I put aside. I waited for news from You which, in regard to this matter failed to arrive since 27 December! This is a fact. I kept hoping that letters had gone astray.

Where now wanders that letter from me to You? But how bitter that wandering is once more -confidentially it certainly was!-- it's immaterial. As, even if I had not written, I was awaiting some information of what went on in The Hague. Was I, or was I not entitled to that?

I ask you this explicitly.

My situation, owing to R.'s inability, unwill or.... stupidity, is very difficult. After what happened to that pitiful £200, he now asks me whether I need "any" money?

To my poor wife the way this matter has gone is not much better than murder.. So I have writtne R. among other things, that at the proper time I shall square it up.

Now he asks me"to write something in support of the Government." My answer is: that the Government first should show that it doesn't protect criminals and thieves, and so it does, all the while I wander as an outlaw.

"If I was inclined to suoport crime, I say, I should have done better staying in the Indies, and join in the hanky-panky in order to become a resident and eventual Minister." Etc.

The fountain of blessings of which you spoke in December somewhat run dry. In the meantime, since the loss of those letters containing money, I suffered--figure out yourself how! And You speak of worries that prevented You to write me? Aye, if ever you had no bread for your child! That breaks. Within 1½ months my wife will be in the street. That school is bankrupt. She still hopes, alas, on my succeeding in The Hague. Courage leaves me when writing her to tell her exactly how things went. Will you write me, please, explicitly, whether you have done well? Do not plead, please. That I will dor You no less than for myself. In its way, the matter is very simple: did You, after having turned to me for advice concerningIndies' conditions, yes or no ignoreme as soon as you came in contact with those people in The Hague? I say yes! And if you too think so, say it, and I will sincerely love you for your candor. The mistake which in this respect youmay have made, not by far compares to the mistakes I so often made, but my dear fellow say it!*

Adieu.

D. D.

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*)(What mister Huet answered the 15th February to both letters, one may find in his published letters, volume I, page 186.) MDDS.

XLIX.

The Hague 4 March 1868.

Dear Mister Huet.

I'm in The Hague. At last! After my struggling since 29 Nov., finally here. R. is occupied with the Chamber and I'll see him tonight at 8. Haven't even a slight idea of what's up, and came only pour

acquit de conscience. Should I succeed in bringing my wife and children here from Milan, then I'll be satisfied. But that will require a relatively great deal. I must know where I can receive them.

That I didn't write you for so long is because of grief. How I have lived this year beggars description. The struggle, merely to stay alive, absorbs my life. What a pity.

I should like very much to speak with you and ask you whether it is convenient for you that I come Sunday, -just to and fro in one day? Your invitation to stay over I hold as having expired, since you are preparing to leave and the disorder of such an impending break-up is great. So I had better not. But I would very much like to have a talk with you. Writing bores me terribly.

Please answer me care of Hotel Toelast.

I am very curious for the result of my talk with R. He writes me privately that the condition (of the Government?) is critical. Does it deserve better?

In the meantime sincere greetings from

t. à. v.

Douwes Dekker.

L.

Confidential. The Hague, 11 March 1868.

Dear Mister Huet.

I promised You Saturday to keep You posted. This has been difficult for me for the reason that each time I thought I would be able to tell You of a decision, once again it turned out to be the old drag.

Were I certain now of being able to come Sunday, then I might not be writing. But I do as indeed I can anyhow send you the copy of a letter that I sent mister R., so You can let it do the rounds.*

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*)(Of the here mentioned letter I have a transcript that Baron Alfonse Nahuys made at that time and edited by Multatuli himself. It follows now, ahead of all else.) MDDS.

TO MISTER J. J. ROCHUSSEN.

LI.

The Hague, 9 March 1868.

Your Exc. was kind enough to approachnearer in writing to what yesterday I had the honor to reply to the sympathetic proposal of His Exc. Van Zuylen.

I have been -and still am- made daily proposals from abroad, including the Indies. These I have partially declined and partially postponed to answer till such a time when it would be convincingly apparent to me that in the end me and my cause will continue to be denied.

That cause is indeed (and now I confine myself to the colonial question only) the one fresh theme with which a ministry will be able to face the people; the only flag under which a substantially new party may be formed.

The upholding of that cause implies:

"We want justice. We demand (by enforcing article 55 of the official "rules, and thusly in complete contradiction of the liberals who are "represented by the late Governor General van Twist) that the Javanese "be protected against arbitrariness. In this lies our governmental "system, well to be distinguished from the opinion, either that the

"(State) kultuur system must continue to exist on paper only, daily "violated as it is by lazy and cowardly officials, or that Java must "be delivered over to private exploiters.

"Our political intelligence tells us that no demonstrations or "oratorical finesses will stand us in good stead at the moment the "Javanese -far too long abused!- in wild amok will take up arms. Also "these our politics are -just as always- the one and only that is in "agreement with humanity and justice."

The acceptance of this program, Exc., is the only condition:

1°. On which the Netherlands will be able to cleans itself of the blemish which by people like the van Twists and consorts has been cast upon our poor country;

2°. On which this Government will be able to maintain itself.

3°. On which I can support this administration.

It certainly cannot be expected from me that I will give myself a blow in the face by taking the part of a government that silently allows the Havelaaar cause (the protection of the Javanese) to rest and thereby perpetuates the un-politic iniquity of the messrs. van Twist and their ilk.

After the treatment that was dealt out to me no one in the Indies ventures to do his duty, and article 55 (the most important one of our official regulations!) will more than ever remain a dead letter so long as I, who insisted upon its enforcement, wander as a hunted criminal; so long as only those are honored, promoted and.... paid, who took part in the violation of this article.

The interests of the Netherlands; of the present Government and the public morality demands my reinstatement.

But even were this otherwise, talent, in the usual sense I have not. So long my spirit does not take part, I am powerless. It's up to the government to sow in my heart a small seed of eloquence, the fertility of which I guarantee. Does it fail to do so, then I cannot render help, even if I so desired.

If, by encouraging me, the Government shows that henceforth it will indeed protect the Javanese, I shall be thankful and sincerely join the Government that at long last abolished the atrocities that, -above all since my efforts failed- put our name to shame.

However, if the Government continues not to want this, then I must take a different road (not at all the liberal one, o no!) but I have promised that justice would be done and I shall know how to keep my word. Why does the Government fail to make a covetous use of the so favorable opportunity to take an honorable part in that effort?

In the Indies people are expecting a hint from me. Many disapprove of my tarrying that has its origin only in the wish: de laver le linge sale en famille.

Well, the Netherlands have made it difficult enough for me to be patient.

And, as Your Exc. is aware of, in other fields too than the colonial one I should have liked to devote my strength for the benefit of my fatherland. More than once did I make bold to write to Your Exc. about that and you indulged in assuring me that Their Exc. of Foreign

and Domestic affairs were in a favorable mind concerning me. From that I concluded that my allusians to certain domestic and foreign developments have been received in a manner not entirely unpleasing. For that reason I make bold to request Your Exc. to offer these lines to the messrs. Van Zuylen and Heemskerk and make an earnest appeal to their good will about which you spoke, and not to under-estimate my words.

That I am still very poor and appear powerless, in a certain sense is the way I want it. This would immediately change when through perpetual denial my conscientious scruples against violence were dismissed. Posterity will be fair and acknowledge that I hesitated long. And when it shall then be known in what condition I waited, wrestling with hardship, constantly aware of my family's penury, then not I will be held liable for the manner in which I reached my goal. This letter, among other things, will be a contribution to my exoneration, since against my habit I am keeping a copy of it.

The condition in which The Netherlands currently finds itself, I have predicted. (One should turn to what I published in 1861 and 1862). It was inevitable. I warned against dry, empty Thorbeckian wisdom, just as I now warn against tarrying and lack of bold initiative.

I waited till my prophesy would have become reality in order then to offer my help as I do through this writing. But this attempt on my part will be the final one . I am 48 years of age and have to be chary with the little time still left me.

Once more, Exc., I keep a transcript of this letter. That's essential for my exoneration if the good will of the messrs. Van Zuylen and Heemskerk should suffer shipwreck on certain.... provinciality of others.

If it be that about *that* my advice is sought, then I will answer with a line from my recent labor (that lies unfinished since I had the honor to apprise Your Exc. in November about the *res publica*.)

> "*He* (a certain state official) *is mediocre*
> *And in the strange times in which we live,*
> *Mediocrity is criminal!*"

Really, there is need of grasp, resilience, independence from formality, genius! Lacking this, one should resign. With ordinariness one cannot succeed in these days of crisis.

It pleased Your Exc. to say: "There is a lack of thinkers; people were worn out?" *I* am not worn out, fortunately so, having still much to do, should I be allowed to apply the energy within me for the benefit of my fatherland.

Whatever the decision be, I feel the need of sincerely thanking Your Exc. once more for the genuine sympathy in which you have indulged to honor me. In the presence of much denial your friendly behavior toward me has softened me. For that reason too I hesitated so long before turning away discouraged. And I pay homage to Your Exc. 's political insight in preparing to pay attention to the signs of the times, and acknowledged the need of using other means than those which for years failed to stand the test.

I have the honor etc.

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TO C. BUSKEN HUET.

L.

Continuation.

.... That piece defines the position. No, not quite! And for that I am sorry, since I would like to see that some one -that is you- knew precisely how Havelaar's cause is constituted.

The public confuses my dissolute condition with my cause. That cause is irreproachable and as such is attacked only by those who lose nothing by failure. I am not attacked by those who stand to lose polemical honor! (This is a fact, isn't it?)

Well, people such as R. know that. That too, for instance, the resident Brest v. Kempen (Slymering) knew. It would have seemed strange to a well inclined judge of my cause that among others that man did not contradict me. But that was impossible.

Be this as it may, R. too knows that Havelaar. Hence my franc parler with him. I tell him straight out, and many would be amazed if it were known how obediently my philippicas are listened to and accepted. He himself exclaims now and then: "Aye, aye, ... Multatuli and Rochussen." That means: who had ever thought that I allow myself to be so criticized! That he exclaimed too when we played chess together last Sunday. I wanted that. And he thought it so funny. Something like Marius upon the ruins of Carthage, I think, or as the Barneveldian: what, finally, does

become of a human being!

In one of his latest letters which I received at Koeln, he wrote: "but for once write something that will thrill the nation" (as if something like that could be done on command.) I replied: factually no, rather literally)

11 March.*

"If the Ministers insist on trying to ignore me -something that will be impossible as soon as I decide to act- the consequences will fall on their heads. I am sick of it, and really would not have had patience for 2½ months (that is after the start of the latest talks with R.) if I had had to deal with Hasselman direct. Now, however, it was difficult for me to break off, since I didn't care to load the appearance upon myself that I disdained Your Exc.'s intervention.

"As for the writing of a brochure that would support the Government.... before anything I must have evidence that the Government has good intentions, and so long as it does not reinstate Havelaar, this is not the case. I cannot support a Government that protects extortion, and this they, who so long abused him who opposed extortion, do. The evidence of improvement is not difficult to render. My complete reinstatement means justice and humanity for the Indies. The contrary means, continuation of the old misdeeds,

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*)(Probably lapsus calami for 11 February.

and Havelaar cannot encourage misdeeds. If that were my aim it would have been easier to join the game in the Indies, be promoted to Resident, and later in the Netherlands, become Minister."

He seems (as so many) not to be able to read. As see, Sunday he proposed in Van Zuylen's name: to cull all my pieces that attacked V. Z. (V.Z. would furnish them to me) and robustly refute them. Then V. Z. would (IF the cabinet could succeed in keeping in power) force my will upon Hasselman ("to turn the legscrews on H.")

This blew me up. How I spoke precisely I do not recall, but R. said: "that he could not exactly transmit this since I had an original way of speaking, etc."

Agreed. I would repeat it in writing and he would send it to V. Z. and H. This I have done. Monday. It's the letter in transcript that goes enclosed. Its contents is a respectable repetition of my verbal excitement and (I must confess) a point of departure if later on I shall to publicize why I had to de-hollandize myself. That 's why I say that I keep a transcript of it. He's aware that otherwise I don't do this.

Yesterday, Tuesday, there was a rumor that the Cabinet would resign. Immediately I wrote a flyer and sent it to the Chamber.

"Exc. It is feared that the Cabinet will resign. That's unnecessary! It can make itself as strong as it wants to, provided it raises a new banner. I beg you to call the attention of those gentlemen to the final 8 pages of my Free Labor, which I enclose. In it is stated

what has to be done. That is Archimedes' εὕρηκα that the "_Toulon est là_ of the youthful Bonaparte.

"The people is sick of stale fare and are thirsting for something worth while. Striving for truth is needed. If this is earnestly _practised_, if this intention too is so expressed as to instill confidence, then it will be possible to gather under a fresh banner. Is that desired, then I shall help. Sinon, non!"

To this too, as to my letter of the day before, no answer yet.. Knowing R. (who immediately answers when he can) I conclude that my note, and the final 8 pages of my Free Labor, are going the rounds for reading. _Proficiat!_

And now _magnus mihi erit_ Apollo, who can tell me how it all will end. I guess that van Z. and H(eemsker')k want to go my way but that they are stuck with Hasselman. Well, then he must be discarded. And no doubt that won't be easy, but whoso desires only what's easy, accomlished nothing.

It's 3 o'clock already, and you must realize that I am curious.

Should I get somewhere, then I will insist on an appointment for you. _Not for your sake_, but because I hold this to be right. I've already told R. this. He insists (and from this you can form Hasselman's _niveau_) that my cause would have been reinstated if H. had not done so much (!) for you. I asked if H. had at his disposal a certain quantum goods he can deliver? etc.

Not only had he done _nothing_ for you but, I said, even were this otherwise then he should have considered this as for the benefit of the _cause_, and not as a personal favor. R. conceded all of that and again exclaimed about the smallness of H. I hope I can come

Sunday, but about that I will still write. For Pete's sake, square my shortcoming with the Courant somewhat. After a couple of days I shall square it all up and deliver a little extra. Just think the tension I'm under due to my chess game.

Sincere greetings,

t. à. v.

D. d.

LII.

Friday morning (13 March '68?)

Dear Sir Huet. I wrote you a few days ago. On the letter, the transcript of which I sent you, I still have no answer.

The agreement with R. was that either he would send it through for reading, or return it to me with notes.

Not having received anything in return, I must assume it's going around for reading. And I have no reply to my letter to the Chamber either, when there was a rumor that the Cabinet wanted to resign. I accompanied my Free Labor with the request to read the last 8 pages in which (1862!) it states that the need is for a new slogan.

And yesterday I wrote brusquely that I could wait no longer "since I was running a high bill and could not start anything before being aware that I was to contunue being repelled."

Well, no answer to that too. So I must believe that the matter is being deliberated.

If I shall come into a position to command then I shall insist on a position for you, not in order to do you a favor, but because

I think it useful. Dumb of H. that he didn't realize it. They imagined having treated you very nicely already, and always start from the standpoint of doing favors,"of helping an individual get to the top." To that I have already said"that I was not interested in you, that is about pleasing you, or satisfying, that not for that purpose I introduced you to him (R.) but in the interest of the cause." That is so, nepotism being an abomination to me. But they stand so low that they can conceive of nothing else. I have said "that I would insist on your appointment even if you were my enemy, and that Hasselman seemed to me to be shy in his calling."

Those people dream of security.

As for me, do they at last begin to realize that I have no use for security. I have told R. explicitly that I "personally" appreciated his"indulgence", but that the rules of the present game were quite something else than doing people favors. I hope that now at last he believes it, mostly because of my refusal to defend v. Z. before he and his associates give me cause to support this government.

My plan is still to pay you a visit Sunday. But you realize how I am drawn to and fro. Any moment may bring me word that will pin me down or drives me either to the right or to the left.

I must have a decision. I can no longer stay in expensive inns.

I recall your pragmatic question: "can they do what you demand?"

Yes! And even more, it would be intelligent. R. considered it proper, and v. Z. too agreed to force it through ("to put the leg-irons on the Min. of Col.") but I must first defend him. Now this I declined, as you have seen from my letter of Monday. Still, it is a

reply to your question.

My re-instatement would be political. I reckon that out of a hundred individuals there are for me.... 1.

against.... 20.

the rest.... 79 are the lunkheads who will be for me as soon as I have success. Those will exclaim: "precisely my idea, I have always said so." And the majority of those success-worshipers I could get for the Ministry.

An _other_ manner of solving there is not.

The liberals too would, upon gaining power, also have need of a new slogan. All former promises are worn out. But them I would not offer my support, o no!

Miss_...._ paid me a visit yesterday. She brought me her writings. Sickening! I didn't know what to say. She is too nice to be insulted, but still in no way could I praise and said:"Girl, write a little _plainer_, a little more _orderly_.... you jump and skip as a drunk and think you're dancing."

She is obsessed (and already for years) with animal protection. Well, that's crazy. I explained to her that there are more important and practical things to do. She concedes that but.... but what people do, _faute de mieux_! _Entre nous_ all those things come down to hysterical emotions. So I told her and she didn't deny it. But what's the use! That funny writing, and that love of horses, that crusade against flea hunting and dog-abuse -aye, 'tis all a _pis-àller_.

And its cure would be simple. Provided the establishment was a

little less dumb. Our morals throw the Minotaur into the jaws of such girls, and the most noble of them! Still, I'll take her to task some time. I will induce her to study chirurgy, then she can place her trop plain of do gooding in a hospital. There she would be at home. Pis-aller it remains, but it's still better than foolish writing and fuss with cab drivers. Of that I might recount comical scenes. A few years ago she bought an old horse, which she wanted to have killed. And see the seller fooled her and she discovered the horse, suffering as formerly and still having to work. Question of identity. Quarreling -yes almost a fight.

Touching it is but -it touches on what is foolish. Since then she became guilty of a certain kind of gossip (hysteria, girl friends; desire for giving, for talking, togetherness,= gossiping!) that caused more harm than the grief about all those dray-horses put together.

So we are! It's a pity. She is a good woman.

Look here, I was so anxious to know whether or not I could come Sunday. I think and hope so! Too bad I can't stay over night, apart from your being occupied, as I would much prefer to talk to you longer. I know it would be interesting to you. I have much to say and I prize it that you will know a little more about me than others do. But that is impossible in one day.

Be you and your wife sincerely greeted from

t.a.v.
Douwes Dekker.

I have scratched out her name. WE do not know where this letter will land.

Too bad that I was unable to talk to you before the day after

Christmass. You could not be aware of certain relationships and you would have been in a better position i f you had joined your cause with mine since -strange as it may seem- I have influence. If you could have read all the letters I wrote and with which, much to my amazement, they failed to get angry, you would acknowledge it. That R., who is not truthful, o no! earnestly wants to help me in my cause, is true! He has his reasons for it

If you ask me whether I'll be successful? No! The inertia's opposition is too large. But a good deal it is already that non-success is not yet certain.

Had I been up to date with your interference, I might have enabled you to take a better standpoint contra Hasselman. He is rather uninformed about relationships and was unaware of what your visit meant. Now it's too late -unless I get the third dissolution passed. Then there's nothing lost. With the liberals I count for nothing. And among the present ministers too there are those who oppose me -but the central figures are in my favor and they wish nothing less than getting rid of Hasselman and Schimm.*

Strange things they are.

Adieu, till Sunday, I hope.

---

*)(Count Schimmelpenninck, Minister of Finances.

LIII.

The Hague, Monday (23rd?) March 1868.

My dear Sir Huet.

Enclosed Erdan, la France Mystique and a little package with stamps for Gideon. There's much chafe among it but perhaps a lone grain that

he can use.

Herewith for scrutiny the letter from the Locomotief. I had requested a little time before answering.

Now it will be -since my Hagueian expedition seems to be failing- about time to decide whether I'm able to do something like that. Such a Courant seems only able to use sharpness and fault finding, and that I cannot fetch on demand.

What, in order to remain myself, I would need is a raise in the Haarlem honorarium, and since Mr. Enschede replied "No" on that proposal, I have to think of something else in order to remain alive.

One thing is very much to be regretted: Even though I have not succeeded, I still have perceived in R. and v.Z. that in their eyes I am valuable. R. and also v. Z. admitted that my support would please the Cabinet, yes, v. Z. asked me for it. Well now this bothers me in finding means for keeping alive. If I now begin giving lectures that have thunder in them, I'll sever myself from the possibility of later, through public reconciliation with the Government, to be enabled to get my wife and children back.

The mood which I observed in The Hague may be used later, provided I wait now and keep peaceful. But because of penury I cannot wait. That's a pity. Your Courant was the only one -and Mr. E. is unwilling. Singular, the man wore a red cotton necktie. I thought that such types had died out.

If you see a chance of returning to that matter -very well.

Edan you may keep (I still have so much that belongs to you)

but the letter from van Kesteren I like to get back.

Receive my best regards for yourself, your lovely wife and little lad, t. a. v.

Douwes Dekker.

Tonight at R. For thelast time, I hope.

LIV.

The Hague, Saturday, (28 March.)

My dear Sir Huet. The matter is still not ended! It's a real chess match, and my head is swimming. Perhaps I'll still succeed and then the first thing I'll do is to insist on an appointment for you. There is no middle way. If I rech my goal I'll have great influence.

To tell of all the incidents that now would make me give up all hope and then again gave me courage is impossible. And tomorrow I must go to Utrecht where I have been invited by a Student Society ([illegible]. Do you know that?) to fill a speaking turn. That this month and even longer I do not earn my pay, I know. But take it that I am ill. It's well nigh so since with all that bustle (three, four, five letters, errands etc. daily, and time and time again a new stress and on top of that even a cold. I cough every night till day break. I hear that my Havelaar will be taken up in the Eng. Parliament. Hasselman is willing to do what I ask but is afraid of going it alone. v. Zuylen too is willing. H. too. But.... preferably only on condition of his staying on.

R. will that they act, even if they don't stay on. They are very well inclined, even sincerely, but.... they fear certain influences. I have many enemies here in The Hague, cela va de soi! Relatives the worst!

I am ill with a cold, and cannot see. Can you use, so that I deliver, enclosed little bulletin that I had let made? But it contains mistakes. There I see: proud as substance. But the choice of articles is real good. No doubt you can ask one of your assistants to correct the errors and inexactnesses. I can hardly see.

And now the lecture in Utrecht!

Sincere greetings to you and your wife.

t. a. v.
D. D.

Do You remember what I said about the uniformity of becoming, and that nature was so simple in her labor?

Take a look at enclosed prints.

Is it not as if we were made in like manner?

Spine.

Nerves.

Rudiments of arms, legs, wings or (and) tail.

Crystal and coral pattern.

But I was not present when they were taken. Possibly there was a purpose involved.

Model A wears a fur coat.

What's your opinion of Le Comte? I do not think him very interesting.*

---

*)(With this went prints of ink blots.) MDDS.

LV.

The Hague, Wednesday.

Dear Sir Huet. Sunday evening at Utrecht I droned up my 3/5 drama. That I call "manger son blé en herbe!" Well, it was lovely. That's

self evident.

But joking aside, I claim it contains good parts. If, when finished, it can become good as drama, I do not know. My audience was pleased since I had warned that they would not find out whether the lovers would get each other? Since I myself do not know that. And it scarcely mattered since there was little or no love -and infatuation none at all- in my piece,

And arriving at home monday noon, I found your card. I was sorry that you had left no address. Why not? I so hoped that you would call again. The servant said: perhaps still this week. Is that so?

My cause is still in suspense. I do believe that nothing will come of it, but it's not quite at an end. Yesterday and today I couldn't do a thing, H. being so busy with his budget. Most probably I'll have a talk with R. tonight. The matter is singular. Three ministers acknowledge that I am right; they conceded that something extraordinary has to happen but.... consider themselves unqualified or incapable to carry it out. And I must acknowledge that I think their lack of self-confidence well founded.

May I hope to see you soon? Sorry for having missed talking to you.

After friendly greetings, also to your wife and Gideon,

t. à. v.

Douwes Dekker.

LVI.

Sunday morning (5 April)

My dear Sir Huet, I have your letter of the 3rd and set me down, not so much to answer it but to turn away a little grief by telling you a little about it.

Do not say that I would do better by preparing a little Bulletin for the press. Later on I shall make up for it twofold when I shall be rescused from the present crisis.

If because of your novel you have no leisure to read my scribbling, then turn my letter over to your missus. (If it were not for the expense and that novel*I would have asked leave to pass one more Sunday with you.)

The 27th Nov. my negotiations began. Now, 5th April, I am just as far. And mark you that for it I postponed many things and turned down others, and all that time had difficulty staying alive. And now that the budget of Col. is accepted, *it might be* that Hasselman (and for instance *marine*) would stay on as specialists. Then it *might be* that Hasselman *perhaps* was inclined to help me *if* his new associates would not oppose him. But this latter is to be expected since the chance that any authority is in my favor stands as 1 against 100.

And it goes without saying that Hass. *wont* help if something has to be overcome for it! Think of it that he frankly acknowledged that I *was right*. (He has told this to v. Z. too) that he even could tell me instances from Lebak that more than confirmed my claims. He told v. Z. that he knew still more about it than I did. He claimed, namely, that one of the resons *why* the Resident of Bantam did not do his duty was a certain dependency on the Regent in matters which I do not mention because your missus read my letter. So I name them as such silently.

---

*)(The free hours of the Sorghvliet Sundays -almost the only free hours Cd. B. H. had at Bloemendaal- were reserved for finishing Lidewyde, the "novel" D. D. referred to. MDDS.

I replied to v. z. that I (even if I had been aware of this) still would not have mentioned such things, and would not hear of them now. And not from *dégout* only. Look, I opposed *general* violation of duty. The Resident of Bantam was not the worst one -on the contrary! By touching on such a particular point it would seem as if I had tripped over an exception *et que tout était le mieux* elsewhere, where such vile relations did not exist. The entire Indies' officialdom is rotten. -Duymaer van Twist has put an official stamp on it, and that I oppose.

But is it not hard now as the head of the colonial administration, the Minister acknowledges that I am right, still must beg for open acknowledgment of that right? Still must be subject to *perhapses* and *ifs*.

The worst is that I cannot wait on this. Such an inn is expensive. So I am considering to take off and leave Holland, where I experience nothing but vexation.

. . . .

From my wife who ultimo March had to leave the school, the business having failed, and who then wished to rent a room, I received word today that she could not do this as she had no money. She will be allowed to stay in that house till Easter. The doctors have prescribed a "health diet". *Le moyen d'en avoir*! And the reviews (among others Contemporaniam) call me a"Dutch Leviathan." And my Saidjah-poesy is a"nineteenth century miracle." And it's to be hoped that many ladies and gentlemen who have poetry in store just throw their copy into the fire, etc. etc. What cruel sarcasm!

In one English Courant I am battered. The day after its issue it was already in Van Zuylen's hands, who showed it to me. I told him it did not bother me but thought it was a bought job. The Havelaar is "tedious" "dull", "full of would be humour", "the writer says at least 20 times that it is monotonous", etc.

I have recommended that paper to other papers to other papers who judge differently, with the remark that Foreign Affairs had received it so quickly, Fresh from the press.

My time is up here. I'm breaking away at once. Not knowing whence, I am unable to give you and address. Perhaps I return to Koeln where, with the help of that good Bergrath (my old address-man) I can get an abode without having to pay instantly. And there I'll see no Dutch Ministers or money grubbers.

That is something gained.

Sincere greetings to you and your wife, and Gideon too.

t. a. v.

Douwes Dekker.

If you intend to write, then -no, I still do not know. That's a bother!

LVII.

Koeln, 19 April, 1868.

My dear Sir Huet. This morning I received your letter of 17 with the £25, which I did not earn. So be it. I will try henceforth to send my little bulletins promptly. Whether that will be possible I do not know, the question being where I shall land. I returned to

Koeln in order not to get frozen down in The Hague and while I thought I would have the best chance to find an abode. Well, for the moment that is settled. But where I'll have to go on the first, I do not know. In answer to your friendly question concerning the manner of sending that honorarium by mr. Charbon* I think it best as follows:

Address: Monsieur A Bergrath
Schildergasse
Cologne.

That man is very reliable, and I guarantee that he will properly turn the registered letter over to me.

However, another question is whether I may demand from Mr. Charbon the trouble of that registration? And the costs. (or are they born by the Courant? Then it's less.)

But sans registration the matter is very risky, since the number of letters to me that have been intercepted, is great.

After the disappearance of the one from R. with £200, and yours with £25, I figure that at least five more were stolen. (Also one to you. A letter namely following a correspondence in an envelope to the H. Ct. That letter contained a digression about the singular tales by v. Vloten that Dr. Grieben would translate my Max Havelaar. I think this was mentioned in that envelope. So if you do remember that I wrote something about it, that does not prove the recovery of that letter. What else was in that letter I do not know. It was a long one and no doubt dealt with my Hagueian connections.)

---

*)(Charbon, Successor to Cd. B. H. at the Haarlem Courant.

Also, letters to and from my wife have been lost. How this is connected with dishonesty at the post office in Holland puzzles me. It might point to Koeln, but I have found no further point of accusation here beyond that.

From my wife I expect word since weeks! I wrote her the 5th. She was practically on the street. I do not know her address. I sent her a little money from The Hague. No answer. (My letter was registered.)

Since my departure from The Hague I'm waiting in vain for letters from R. I wrote to Hasselman that R. would always have my address (as I had agreed with the latter.)

Yes, those "opinions of the press" are bitter for me. And it means nothing! It remains a singular thing to me always how everywhere the confounded scribbling stands in the foreground. What I have done -certainly not a trifle- does not seem to be worth notice. Or might it be a gratifying sign of the times that integrity is such a usual matter? But why then are people continually trained to become officials with the internal administration in the Indies to replace those who handed in their resignation?

Didn't I write you that Hasselman over-acknowledged that I was right? Yes, over acknowledged as he digressed about the shameful conditions in Lebak and embroidered on my theme. He knew it personally, named instances, wondered why I had not found in the archive a certain memoir from him, and had continually expected me to appeal to it. Well, isn't that enough to become bitter?

That H. v.d. Hoeven would not respond to me I could not believe. Then that reply is either delayed, or his letter was stolen. (Upon just hearing the word post, I get nervous.) I cannot believe that you would not be for your own self as well as for me, his welcome guest. I would stake my life on it.

Where I must take up? I really do not know! Being separated from my wife, to which I intended to put an end in The Hague, is killing me. And also my plan to raise a little money in the event of a failure of my official efforts, by going on a tour with my drama, also has failed.

I have written to Maastricht whether I still could hold a lecture there, but got no reply. It is self evident that this was only in order to live during the month of May, and not for bringing back my family. That luxury seems to be demanding too much.

My wife and children wrote a letter to R. in which they thank him for his help! But that explanation mark is superfluous since I am convinced that he did the best he could, were it only from dépit of seeing himself devoid of influence.

Being uncertain about staying here it might be that I returned to Holland -without exactly knowing why, but one has to be somewhere. I must confess that beholding the Indies' prosperity disturbs me, but still it might be that there I might find the first means to stay alive.

Edmonton & Douglas, the Scotch publishers of Max Havelaar suggested through some one that I should write for them. But I have nothing to write.

I realize that you are busy and wished for you being hale and well at Suez, or farther -no the voyage is pleasant. Not so serene as a boat journey but also not so tedious and boring. Tell your wife once made the trip alone with two children and a baboo who herself had to be attended to as a child. Will you be careful in making note of the contents of your marked and numbered trunks?

Aye, I might have had such a desire to write to you a good deal about your stay in the Indies, but I feel much battered. That Hagueian effort has set me back a lot.

Be very sincerely greeted, you and yours, from

truly yours

Douwes Dekker.

There I get an appointment as.... "corresponding member of the Institute: The Tongue is all the People. Ah!

That Nahuys met you on the street may have been accidental, but otherwise he would have waited for you at the Hotel to give you my bon voyage and to tell you how things stood. He is one of the most interesting phenomena in the realm of knowledge of men that I ever observed. If I described it people would think I made it up.

Does your novel suit you? I am quite curious about it.

This is perhaps the last letter written by Dekker to Huet. If I am not mistaken the latter departed in the latter part of May for Java with his family.

During his stay at The Hague Dekker had paid a visit to Huet in Bloemendaal, and even lodged there for the night. He was touched by the friendly reception, and in spite of

a few observations made by Rochussen, the portee of which he had failed to understand, he still had not in the least become suspicious that Huet had done things of which he would not, perhaps not dare tell him. During Dekker's visit Huet had revealed nothing of his negotiations with Rochussen and Hasselman.

Later it appeared why.

But in October 1868 de Waal, then minister of Colonies, revealed the documents concerning the negotiations between his predecessor and Huet. In the main this was the proposal of Hasselman to the king, of 10 March 1868, reading:

"Long since journalism in the Netherlands East Indies has drawn the attention of the Government. Not without apprehension can it be observed how the daily press in those regions, unmindful of the precautionary measures, included in Your Majesty's decision of 8 April 1856, imposed rules on printed matter in the Indies, has an increasing damaging meaning through the severe tone it more and more attains. As a result of an initial exchange of thoughts with the Indies' administration, the governor general has sent me a ponderous volume of information concerning this important subject in which, it is true, besides his own, the advice of many authorities are voiced, but wherewith are not offered the building materials for the solution of the question that, as it were, rules here: to what extent, namely, can in the Indies freedom of the press, and in particular the daily press be granted, without that it there so necessary Dutch authority be jeopardized, or the Oriental people hurt in their morals and customs. There exists, by the imminent departure for Java of Mr. C. Busken Huet, currently the opportunity to assure the Indies' administration the enlightenment of a capable man, familiar with journalism in general and with that of the Netherlands in particulr, whose conviction quite expresses my own that necessarily the press in the Indies must be led on a better terrain, and who had himself declared ready for the gratification of a free journey to Java for himself and his family per the so called overland-route, to assume the task in order to, after having made himself closely acquainted with Indies' journalism, to serve the Indies' administration with consideration and advice concerning the question: What are the measures to be demanded of the administration to bridle the excesses of the press without hindering freedom of thought and feeling more than is necessary for the assurance of law and order to be maintained. I feel it to be my duty, respectfully to give Your Majesty in consideration, by assenting to the Bill hereby offered for decision, the good services of Mr. Huet, for the efficient regulation of the subjective important matter to be assured to the Indies' administration."

It was thereby revealed that the sum allowed for the transfer of mister Huet was f2967.50.

After this revelation Multatuli grasped Huet's silence. "I put confidence in him," he said. "I sent him to Rochussen, being convinced that he and I were working for the same noble cause and, as a lackey, without bothering himself about our cause he pockets an insignificant fee.... fi!"

Only once has Huet, and that only indirectly, approached Dekker about the matter. Namely in the letter of 18 December 1868. (Viz: Letters of Cd. Busken Huet, Vol. I, page 195) which Huet wrote after the revelation of Minister de Waal had reached the Indies.

Dekker has never replied.

* * *

TO MRS. DOUWES DEKKER--VAN WYNBERGEN.

LVIII.

Koeln, 12 November (1867)

Dear Tine, Yes, I have Stefanie's letter, and now your letter too, and in fact I'm sad about it as I see the main thing in your change is that you, who needed rest and quiet (as had been promised you by the invitation to come to Milan) now will have many cares and trouble. You have a cough, that, to me, is of most importance in the matter, and thereby all falls away that might have been good. I am very perturbed!

Do you ask me still what I did and do? I worry and suffer. Even in my sleep I seek for means to bring you back, and to hear now in addition that because I have some one to take your place I acquiesce as it were in the unnatural separation, is hard indeed. That you, concerning me, are not well informed by Stefanie who had heard "that I could get money from any publisher for my writing" (which dead simply is a lie) I grasp very well. Besides, Stefanie has a peculiar manner of presentation. In her letter about the Lecomte school she talks about your"appaointment to directrice" as if you were liberated! She touches just casually on the shape of your health in passing, as if it were secondary and not just the cares into which you have fallen (sans financial gain, that you certainly needed!) will be to your disadvantage. I am very upset. Even if you had

f6000.- yearly now, even then things could not conyinue this way, what with your ailing lungs. Ogod, 'tis so bitter. Not on that condition did you go to Italy! Stefanie p resents it as if you were liberated.. Quite naturally, the invitation to come to Italy must be crowned with a good result.... even if you go to rack and ruin! .I do not deny that you could do nothing else but go, but fatal it is! Our separation would not have lasted so long if you could have stayed nearby. There was but one reason to justify it: that was your and the children's wellbeing. And that, in so far as the children are concerned, is only partly, and for you not at all reached. On me it has had a fatal influence. A hundred times it has occurred to me that I could have tried to start housekeeping, but now it took so much for a re-union that making a beginning. In the meantime I get the blame for your presence in Italy, and I feel the pressure of it. Do not think that Mimi ever was a burden. She has kept me alive and since years now tolerates the deepest misery with more courage than I have had of late.

That reference to it in your letter is bitter for me indeed. But that is because you have no conception of how I struggle. I avoid writing about it, and this is natural since you know how it hurts me to add to your grief by sad letters. Then too is the dwelling on drudgery, the daily succession of hope and fear and final failure so bitter. Then I suffer once more what I suffered. Take now, for instance, the Flemish cause. I wrote to the best of my knowledge to induce the people to make use of me so that I could call you and the children back and supply us with a fatherland in Belgium. During all that time

I was continually à la vielle to succumb from hunger and who knows how I was able to withstand it. Often I counted the time that I still could live by the hours. When I had three days of shelter and food left I was already glad. Now, after all my writing about it, after all that talk of sympathy, people will do nothing. That has occupied me since August! What I have suffered since that time beggars description. When lying in bed in the evening and think of you and th e children there passes a shock through my body. With patience and planning (and always in fear that I shall not live till the result) I have done my best, the upshot has been that I've received fr.200 (from a millionaire) in advance for a lecture I am to hold at Ghent!

After such a failure I collapse again and I need time in order to perk up a little. Such is my life and you reproch me.

I am all agog with that letter from Stefanie. Because of regard for you and Edu I cannot say how I think about everything and how angry I am about that invitation to come to Italy. Now I also consider her praising to the skies of the very sad affair with the school, fabricated to cover herself, as if that journey to Italy has been such an intelligent move! You had to accept it. Besides you could not know that there lay so little sincerity in the assurance that it was to give you respite. And I too could not know it. Aye, I was so happy. And now I am more afraid than ever!

Stefanie told me that I must not write you sad letters, since that was so bad for your health, ye gods how terrible. Now is that ignorance or mockery? In any case it's cruel.

Edu 's failure in a sense pleases me. You realize how I mean it. It's better for him than acclaim, which is bad for his character. That too spoils my mood. The separation from the children is most cruel. And that sweet Non! Oh, I must not think of it. And I am supposed to write books! That would not be demanded from any one who had a headache; but grief is overlooked.

Here I must try to finish my drama. But it's no good and will make no progress. Conaider that I'm under continuous pressure to write "sublimely". If my work (completed in such circumstances!) is just mediocre, then I shall have lost the rénommée of writing and then I shall have lost all. You would see how quickly every one would fall over me who now dare not to write against me, as soon as I had offered something mediocre. I now have the choice of not writing and save my fame with hunger, or indeed write and lose my fame, which neither would get me bread. I think it's up to me to be aware of whether I have something to write. Why doesn't Stefanie become pregnant? I challenge her to have twins for once. Ah yes, that would be good, that I "would" do in her place. Oh, those would doers! Any one disposed to force writing on me where this does not come forth naturally, shows never having grasped a letter of my writing.

Say, would it not be possible for you to thank her verbally for that letter? I see no chance to hide my bitterness since I cannot refrain from mentioning your health being the main thing. On the contrary, not answering would seem impolite, and then it's not good because of Edu.

My head is dull.

late in the evening.

Look how strange, there I stopped this letter because I was so depressed, and there I read in the Haarlemmer that there is a demand for an editor for a newspaper. I will write in about it and so close in a hurry.

LIX.

Koeln, 30 November 1867.

Dearest, dearest Tine. Imagine, there I am in a rather deep tension, from which I must try to create something good.

For the past several months english and french reviews are occupied with me. In Holland people are boasting that "Dutch literature is beginning to attract attention abroad. They lay claim to the praise but.... throw the objections at my head.

Now the North british review contains a n article in which liberalismus and conservatism are confused with my cause. That piece has been translated by the revue brittanique. Good, all would require an answer. But listen further.

De Pene, recalling through all that reviewing that I had written him in 1860, and probably at a loss of how to fill his sunday courier, tries to ridicule me, purely for the fun of it, and nothing is easier than giving him his due. That's his way of replying to my friendly letter of 1860 and the present of a Havelaar. So that too begs for a reply.

But.... my aim is to get you and our children back by finding something substantial to do. You know how, learning that there was

a demand for an editor, I tried to get some information about it through Huet. For the past twelve days I have heard nothing about it. My guess is that they want a party man. But.... while seeking something like that I am enpeine about answering those foreign things and, by speaking about Holland, sever myself from all else. I am in hot correspondence about that with Huet who would like to see me reply, although I have clearly explained to him that before I once more place in line all opposed to me, I must have you and the children back.

That is one part of the complication.

Now nº 2. Two weeks ago I got into correspondence with a certain Mr. Nahuys in Holland, who is very enthusiastic for my cause. The poor fellow had written me already many years ago, but I did not reply then. Still he kept on, and knowing little or no english he managed to get into England, found employment with the telegraph office and now, returned to Holland, translated the Havelaar and endeavored to find a publisher. Just today I got a letter from him that he has succeeded in it after trying very hard. And already eight days ago he asked me for a preface. But I could not accommodate him, again because then I would sever myself from everything in Holland. The publisher acquiesces in it that I do not write a preface, as requested by him, and the good Nahuys writes just now about the definite agreement of the firm: hurrah, hurrah, it will be published, and the Hollanders will hear the truth overseas! (Consider that I let the translation proceed but in order not to get embroiled declined to write a preface. It's possible for the translation to have happened outside of me, which is really true, anyhow.)

But now nº 3. In Holland the Chambers are at loggerheads again with the cabinet. Four days ago I wrote a letter to Rochussen. (You know how angry he was when he wrote me the time I was in Paris.) I said that his bitter tone of that time would not prevent me from carrying a kind heart towards him, nor to make him a proposal whenever the general welfare demanded this.

I really had no idea that he would answer me and see, just today, simultaneously with Huet's urge once for all to reply brusquely to the reviews; and with Nahuys' letter that the scotch publisher has agreed to go ahead; how mysteriously all of it comes at once: Rochussen writes me. "I received your letter of day before yesterday from Koeln in a favorable mood and make haste to reply.

"I recognize much talent and originality in you; I have always considered you to be an honest man. My grievances contra you were mainly: 1º Your too great state of emotion. 2º Your politics on the colonial terrain being contrary to my politics. Was the letter which I wrote you when you were in Paris somewhat bitter, then it was because the pending translation of your work into french was unpleasant to me.

"But be there what it may about that, I'm convinced that your pen has influence on the public opinion and might become a support of the government. I too have tried to support the count van Zuylen." (v. Z., his son-in-law the minister who now is at loggerheads with the Chamber and is completely in his right. Never has a minister made himself so useful. That man did accomplish something! Liberated

Limburg from Prussia. Saved Luxumbourg a prussian garrison, and.... managed to keep the peace which was a dime on its edge! Still, the chamber prattlers knew better.)

.... "and made it evident, although in ill health and contrary to doctor's orders, by going to the chamber to vote for his budget.

"Whether he will stay with the administration is unknown to me; at the moment he and the minister of internal affairs is with the King, at het Loo. If he stays on then I'll acquaint him with your letter and recommend its tendency, provided: ....I add this in all honesty, you agree not to oppose the system of colonial administration. Defense of it I do not ask as I do not like to demand from anyone to speak or act against his convictions: something I trust you would not do anyhow.

"Would Y.H. have a desire to write me in more detail, then do so confidentially. It might for instance be useful if Y.H. would more specifically inform me in what manner and on what conditions you would lend your help.*

"With high esteem etc."

---

*)(During the correspondence Mr. Rochussen requested Multatuli to burn his letters, and the latter did so, although reluctantly. The letters from Multatuli to Rochussen must have been destroyed, as when I inquired about them Mr. Rochussen's son told me that among his father's papers no letters from Multatuli were found.

Just so, one letter was saved being published in "De Gids" of 1895, carrying all marks of authenticity and I let it follow here.

The paragraphs in the preceding Letter to M.D.D.V.W. quoted as being from Mr. Rochussen, were written in reply to this, now following, letter.) MDDMS.

……

TO MISTER J. J. ROCHUSSEN.

LX.

Koeln 27 November 1867.

To His Excellency
J. J. Rochussen.
Minister of State.

Excellency!

Your latest letter received at Paris, no matter how bitter, and to my way of thinking contrary to the tone in which Your Excellency was pleased to address me at the Amsterdam International Congress, will not in the least hinder me always to carry a thankful, sincere feeling towards Your Excellence, so as in order, where it can be useful for the public weal, to make a request of Your Excellency.

I learned that the ministers have submitted their resignation and that because it pleases H. M. to accept it, the tattle tales who deal in liberalismus again will have free reign. Must the Netherlands once more be delivered over to the dry pedantry of mister Thorbecke? The Indies to mister Fransen van de Putte?

Can mister van Zuylen not use me? Am I not allowed to take part in the struggle to make the King again king, the government again government?

It's up to mister van Zuylen to be the Netherlands' Bismarck. The country would fare well by it. I am prepared if eventually Your Excellency or mister van Zuylen would be pleased to support

Continuation.

LIX.

That letter is lovely and might lead to a nice connection. But now you will realize that I am quite confused with all the correspondence I have assumed that would be interrupted again. Also I do not know exactly how I can put R.'s good will to good use. That means: through what demands. So far I have thanked him this afternoon for his letter and will write more in detail tomorrow. I intend to tell him that I want you and the children back. His suggestion about the Kultuur System is diplomatic and a proof to me that van Zuylen (in R.'s judgment) might need me. R., namely, knows better than anyone that I am for the System, as opposed to Free Labor as well, and stronger, than he. It's a diplomatic way of stating a condition instead of an objection, in order not to commit himself without a condition. It will say: "gut, we don't call on you because we are stuck (which they are indeed! In Holland everything is just the way as I predicted for years) no, only because you will help defend the Kultuur System." You see my promise, which is easy for me to give, can then count as an offer from my side. I know that.

Be this as it may, I have already written that he can count on that without difficulty. That I was perturbed about the Chamber's conceit that stymied administration, and I would help to make the king king again. "He must have also in his political behavior, have the strength to spend the night on the dike," (ust as during the recent flood.) etc.

me at a most essential chamber dissolution (now or never) to take care that this time indeed "new blood" will course in our Parliament, men who grasp their call differently than the three fourth of our"esteemed members".

A single showing on the part of the Government that it favors me -it's well known that the motives would not be difficult to find- and my writing would be influential..

Is there then so much talent in excess after all these years that there is no use for mine?

Admittedly, I am not a conservative. But neither is Your Excellency! There is a need of quite something else than the worn out formalities wherewith -above all since 1848- many who sans such a party-flag would have been nothing at all, have had to help themselves. That other I can deliver, I think, in the event I shoulf find support.

And that support I do not solicit from personal interest, but in the interest of the public weal.

After sincere greeting I have the honor to be with the highest esteem,

Your Excellency's obliging servant,

Douwes Dekker.

Breitestrasse 123.

But mark you: tomorrow I must write again and submit my conditions. And just now I get news of the success of the translation! Everything in one day!

There are still other complications. It's very gaunt with me and I wrote to Antwerp if I could lecture there for pay. I've been waiting in vain for fourteen days for an answer. Three or four days ago I wrote to Maastricht about lecturing there for money, although that has some difficulty since upon entering Holland I must first go to jail. But that I wanted to clear up, as it obstructs me in my movements. So about that I am in conference and have, (if Chatteleux can arrange an evening for me -the need is high) to stir interest, the subject:"A few observations about dramatic literature, followed by a presentation of three acts of a drama." I must do something like that in order to draw. Now if I manage to arrange that, if they let me lecture before jailing me, then I'll face a new hurdle. In the half-finished drama that I must present there holds forth a ludicrous king who, instead of looking after the interests of the people, spends his time with rags and ribbons etc. of uniforms. That, of course, jars very badly again with the negotiations with R.

And withal lack of money. My purpose with that very attrayant lecture all over Holland is to save up money for letting you come. Now consider how all is running together!

The worst part is that I have no time to wait. The need is so urgent which makes me act otherwise than I wanted.

Although all of this causes confusion now, and I do not know how to

tackle it, there is nonetheless some movement, and about that I wished to write you quickly. Dagh my dearest Tine, dagh lovely, lovely children.

'Twill now be the question how much influence Rochussen will have on van Zuylen, and whether van Zuylen dares. My proposals will be for the king to dismiss the chambers and re-write the lame constitution.

LXI

Koeln, 6 december 1867.

Dearest Tine, love. Listen, there is a ray of light! I shy from giving you much hope, but still I must not remain silent on what hope there is. I am in negotiation with the Government. My demand is that I must be enabled to return you and the children to me. I am polite but forceful in my demands. "They" will use diplomacy. Yesterday I wrote: "It is in the interest of the government to make of my lance a glagpole."

You must know that Holland is tottering. Everybody agrees that a strong effort must be made to bring about order. The chamber must again be dismissed, and it will happen. The newspapers do not know it yet, but it was my proposal and Rochussen writes me that it is probable. If so, the uproar will beggar description and the government will have difficulty keep ing itself intact. Well, I want to help it. R.,(father-in-law of the prime minister) writes me:

"As soon as it is certain (the dismissal of the chamber) I will speak with count van Zuylen and a couple of other ministers about the help you offer and thereby reveal that this will be added powere for them. I will then brief you."

He also asks "what must be done to relieve me from that Amsterdam episode." (Conviction, jail and fine.) Well, annulling it is simple.

He is aware that Max Havelaar is in the press at Edinburgh and that the publishers have asked me for a postscript. I have written him that it's up to the Government how that postscript will read.

Thusly, dear heart, you see how I defend myself like an old rabbit. Long the decision cannot tarry. The government as well as myself have reason for speed. Could it be that the ministers (though standing under R. who just now stands at their head) scorn me from ignorant stubbornness .... dear Tine, then it's beyond me. I have done what I had to.

I confess to having hope. I knew that Holland would run afoul, it could not do otherwise, and also that there would be a search for fresh endeavor. I am too nervous to tell you all in detail. I hope, I hope this time. I dream of a benign triumph, and then you'll get your share.

LXII.

Koeln, 14 Decr. 1867.

Tine dearest. I have your letter of the 9th. Well, then you still did not have my latest of (I believe) the 6th. Now your letter is melancholic but I consoled myself somewhat that within a day or two you would feel a little better. Anyhow, things look promising.

One thing bothers me. Many things go slower than I would prefer. That I cannot change. but I am on a good road I am. . I am qui te well aware that you are looking ahead. My demand is that you and the children are returned to me, on that condition I will help.

Help, you say? Yes! What I've preached for years seems now to become about. You have no notion of the condition in which Holland is. It's a

Babylonian confusion. And R. admits frankly that I would be a great support. He has written that three times already. As for the way he wills it, I would be already re-instated and you and the children in The Hague. He is in my favor as I never anyone had. He is.... to kiss him. The old man writes me most lovely letters and talks with the ministers about my re-instatement. But.... he says he is tired and old and lacks the strength to see anything through. Besides, he no longer wants to take too much on his horns. He complains about loss of memory, etc.

I, namely, have insisted on it for him to take the reins of the government and dismiss the chamber (somewhat like Bismarck in Prussia). That he wants to see happening -and very much so!- but he himself is too old for it, he says. Admittedly it embraces much. Good! So what will happen? the other ministers must act, and I hope it will succeed, although the so called liberals cry out strongly against it. If R. gets it through the present cabinet must stay on and, (this is the hope) re-instate me. R. wants it. I am convinced of his good will. His letters are most adorable. But the other ministers must also approve, and he must convince them. Easy all of this is not, since I am very comprometttant. You are aware that the recognition of me includes a certain demonstration, a kind of leap through barrel. But.... they need me. And this is certain, if they don't do it now, they still have to come to it later. I have looked well into the situation. R. must acknowledge that my political insight is keen.

That I will be re-instated sooner or later (and then rise) I am convinced of, what is in doubt:can I succeed this time?

But all stands well. Imagine R. wanted absolutely to rid me of that

jail sentence. "You are not supposed to do one day for that crazy incident," he writes, and includes postage to ask the King to be freed from the matter. He tells me: "write that little request just short and simple" as though to say: "I will add what's needed!" Also he ties it to my coming to The Hague. I am as good as certain that I will be called within a few days. In the meantime I am busy writing a piece that R. probably will hand to the minister, or even will have printed (about the Indies). This evening he wrote me (that is, I received it this evening) that on the way to the 2nd Chamber he wanted to send me a telegram: "continuez et achevez, signed philo-multatuli = friend of m. But the telegraph wires were down. What do you think of that? Lovely, isn't it?

That "continuez" refers to what I already sent him.*

*) The piece in question here was published in 1871 by Waltman at Delft under the title: "Once More Free Labor". MDDS.

Apart from all this I hear from everywhere that I'm being looked for. Van Helden got a letter from England asking for my address. The translation in Edinburgh continues. Huet also informs me that in Germany some one is at work. From the Indies (Samarang) I received a letter yesterday offering association with a daily paper on very nice terms. Briefly, there is motion everywhere and I hope that this time I'll get everything together (that is you and the children with me and re-instated in a solid sphere of activity.)

But dear, now I must do everything with tact and to have to do you but one request, that you get well. Aye, that is such a bitter thought for me: that you suffer. All the sad expressions in your letter touch me less than that you cough. All else I hope to get in order. Even that you are short of money bothers me less at this moment while I have such

hope that all will be redressed.

That R. has not finished the matter awaits the dismissal of the chamber. It pleases me that from here I insisted on the dismissal and that by now it has become such a bone of contention. The king hesitates long. I wrote to R. that not only must this happen but the Constitution must be changed. That must sooner or later!

I have indeed hope on re-instatement and to follow by a great career. Well, from my tiny abode here in Koeln that is no trifle, and but for the fact that you are not well, I would be full of courage. What R. is able to do, he does, that is certain. It's a pity only that he fears putting himself too forcefully in the lead. Yesterday evening I sent him the little request to the King. He had already talked about it to the minister of justice. Lovely of him to send me a postage stamp himself. And he sent me f25 a couple of times. That's not much, you'll say. Yes, but he will send me more when I'll be ready to depart from here for The Hague.

One thing is clownish. At least three times I have written him that he must also insist on my re-instatement if the minister does resign, and thusly leave a thorn in the side of Thorbecke in my person. To that he does not answer. He may be afraid to write. He asks me to burn his letters and seems to be very shy and plans to wait till I arrive in The Hague and then arrange everything verbally.

Imagine Huet, who is most solidly friendly, had heard"that your position had so improved". I have informed him better a nd hope it will reach Potgieter. I am quite absorbed with my piece for R. but am thinking about writing personally to P.... no, not that. I shall do so when I've progressed a little and have security. Aye, take care for a little while yet!

LXIII.

Koeln, 20 Dec. 1867.

Dear Tine, Do you have my letter of yesterday? *

*)This letter I have not found. MDDS .

I wrote you that I was expecting a letter from R. that evening. Well, that came this morning early. Everything's very well! I live in great expectations. So be in good spirits and have courage.

R. is really most lovely. It seems he is determined to help me solidly this time, really, should it fail this time it wont be his fault. But it wont fail. The only thing is that all goes slower than I wanted. R. self complains about it.

The funny part is that he, who is really a sensitive man, does just what I want. I asked him to have my brochure transcribed this way and that (half sheet and written on one side of the page only in order to be quickly ready for the press when I arrive in The Hague, and he says that he will have it precisely done so.

I requested an audience for Huet and he readily called for Huet and even told him that he (Huet) should state his own time so that he will be home and not make a trip in vain.

The matter of imprisonment (says R.) is "under consideration." He is confident that this will turn out well, but complains about the tardiness "in Holland".

"As soon as that matter is settled you must come here and I will personally introduce you to Count van Zuylen" the head of the cabinet. Van Zuylen, namely, has already read a part of my thesis.

Also I had asked Rochussen to let Huet read my piece for his

judgment. And that too he will do.

Then R. writes me that for my journey to The Hague "he will give me money, or rather loan it in order, as he hopes that will happen, I will return it from my expected wealth."

Isn't all of it nice?

Tineke, tineke, you can see I keep you posted, now that there is something good to report!

I do guess and fear that they may try to deceive me at The Hague through flattery and weaken me thereby. I hope to contrive one good thing. I must be enabled to let you return with security of an own peaceful home.

Now don't feel frustrated if it still requires a little while! Think that all is going well and I'm just waiting. I cannot afford to spoil things by hurrying.

Let me assure you that I am already looking for a house to rent! Yes, and for the number of rooms. My own Edu and my sturdy Non each will have a liittle room, well furnished. I can so lose myself in that. And you will be spoiled. I keep thinking of warm covers for your feet and a pretty stove with a glowing fire. I like an open hearth. And you'll get a warm house coat and a very easy chair. And how I will enjoy seeing the children eat! And each may choose a day for his favorite dish and fridays fish. And you will get all my works, neatly bound.

Debts I cannot pay, that would be too much, but I already made an arrangement so that, I hope, we will have peace.

As I write to you I never include my political demands. Going into

detail takes too long. As for you the main thing is that you and I can be comfortable together, without anxieties. I will make everything good with you, I hope. And when you are once again jolly, I shall laugh once again. I sang yesterday.*

Mimi has shown exemplary loyalty and courage. She has suffered hunger. Not as a figure of speech but in reality, and has never complained. She has literally kept me going. Now she prepares the articles for the Courant, as I am occupied. I have already written Huet that -even though I'm doing well- I want to continue it. It brings in f25 a month and free Haarlem Courant. Thusly one can remain informed, the Haarlemmer being good these days. It covers a wide field.

There is a terrific tension in Holland, as well as everywhere in Europe. I see big storms ahead.

When I spoke of renting a house, I thought of The Hague, since I've got an idea that I will receive you there. Stay there how long? Later leave for the Indies? That I don't know. The main thing is that I get going again.

I surely would have liked to send you more than one thaler, poor girl! That I cannot. Keep a stiff upper lip, as always.. Look, I could easily write to R. to send you something, and he would do so! but I must keep the relation simple. So, dear, keep yourself good and strong.

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*)(Dekker no doubt will have sung that day with exceptional pleasure, and so came to write about it. Usually he would, as soon as the cares could be set aside for a while, start to sing. He sang much. He read much too, but that was varied with much pottering, such as binding books, glueing portfolios and boxes, whittling wooden objects, and while pottering and playing chess he could sing for hours at a stretch. He had a good voice and a good ear for music.)MDDS.

As soon as I am able I'll come to your rescue.

I hope that Potgieter, after Huet's warning, will grasp that you are not out of difficulties.*

---

*)(Later we have had reason to surmise that Tine during her stay in Italy received through or from Mr. Potgieter a hundred francs monthly. Dek did not know it then. Tine had never written in detail and he thought that she only received money for Eduard's education. When in February 18 69 she returned to Dekker, Mr. Potgieter's assistance stopped.

Mr. Albert Verwey, who was so kind as to attend to the correspondence between Potgieter and van Vloten, writes me that it has become evident to him that Tine at first received frs. 50, but after"her hemorrage in Jan. 1867," till her return to Holland, frs. 100 as relief. Dek was not informed of her hemorrage in Jan. 1867. Only in April of that year did he learn of such an illness, as is evident from his letters.)MDDS.

Huet is a solid ally! His departure for the Indies is favorable for me relative to his influence there, but here in Holland I'll miss him very much. He admits to being dry, but one can rely on him. My best friends have always been so dry, that you know. I am very fond of algebra and trigonometry in friendship.

In reality I had wanted to mail this with the one thirty train. I usually drop it in the mail-coach and see it depart. But often I write longer, so that it gets too late for me to dress and then mimi goes at the last moment.

And now this one was not ready as I had to write to R. too, and that train leaves almost at the same time, so that mimi is now on the way with the letter for Holland and not with this one. Well,

you have yesterday's. That I now write you so soon is because I spoke of a letter I expected from R. Well, he writes most lovely. The only complaint is that everything goes slower than I visualized.

That plan to introduce me to van Zuylen, minister of Foreign Affairs and Cabinet Chief, is bon signe, mostly since I repeatedly have insisted on manifesting power abroad against Bismarck and the imperial desires of Prussia. I see a chance of bridling Prussia a little and to that I have repeatedly pointed in my letters to R.

That I introduced Huet, who will have much influence in the Indies, to R., has succeeded very nicely. Huet will be flattered that he -after I got permission to use his name- so quickly was invited to come to The Hague. From him I still have no message, but R. writes me that he has attended to it. Don't you think it's nice? Give me a mark for my manoeuvring. I write and order all at the same time now and it marches well. At the same time this is to make up for my long idleness. I did pay close attention. When I did nothing it was because nothing was stirring. You see how I have jumped out of my corner right on time, just as the cat, "that hours long in a huddle sat."

I'm so optimistic! You need not write, you hear! You need not write, you hear! But if without tiring yourself out you want to drop me a little line, it's quite welcome. Don't use postage. I have asked R. to send me some money. He is bound to do so. Funny, eh? But that money is not for your support. It's for clearing the decks here, and to travel to The Hague. So I will have to save it for that.

In one of my previous letters I wrote you to be careful with your

informations to Stefanie. To pay off all my debts is impossible. (Later, yes.) I have a list of them ready, 'tis frightening! If I get hold of a little money I shall be very, very careful. Once back in Holland I too shall not boast, and there will be no reason to do so. I am well aware of the difficulty to pay f10 with f1, and yet every one who has something coming will fall all over me. So only speak of a temporary appointment, not of re-instatement.

How glad will Edu be! And Non! They will have a good little father in me. I'll take a walk with them to Scheveningen and in the Park, and I'll do all I can to please them. I'm already finding fun in it. And first of all you. Dagh my Tine, now I'm going to dress myself and then to a cafe to read the papers. From the money I expect from R. I must redeem my watch and mimi's watch, and her shawl. The distress was high when on 27 november I started this matter. We had nothing more to pawn. But now it will soon be over! Dagh my girl! Dagh dear children.

LXIV.

31 December 1867.

My dear lovely Tine. I write so as not to let you look for news which I do not have. Perhaps there will still come a letter from R. before I mail this one, since already for the past three days I wait for tiding and money.

When I'm in The Hague I shall have to play an intricate game. You should grasp that I can help the Government. And this does not concern only the Indies, but also the Internal Affairs and in the first

place our relations with Prussis! I already wrote R. that if Holland did not start resolutely to grow it was on the way to the moon, and with a few words I gave a hint of what was to be done. (Divide Belgium between Holland and France; Flemish movement to be an outer wall against Prussia). He replied that he already had thought about and would let me read a memoir he had written, as soon as I arrived at The Hague. He also wrote that he would introduce me to the minister of foreign affairs (that is Count van Zuylen, a cousin of his son-in-law. The latter is embassador at Paris.) And I'll come in contact with internal affairs too. The minister (Heemskerk) has charge pr. interrim, of Justice. So it is he who is in charge of that funny verdict. Later I shall have truck with him about elections. 'Tis quite possible for me to become a candidate.

R. according to Huet, has talked about me with"interest and distinction", and, wrote Huet further "it seems to me that all measures have been taken to let you return with honor. " So, dearest, everything stands well, if only they would hurry a little! And that agitated waiting does me so muc harm! I have to ponder on intricate things, and now cannot think as I want to. I have lost patience, but till now have taken care that my letters do not give evidence of it.

LXV.

16 January.

What I have had to go through after my previous one, begs description.

The 31st december I sat, as you have seen, waiting for money. It did not come.

(Here follows the story of the stolen letter,
of the search with the p.o. etc.)

But all that time I sat, and even till now am, without money. At last came R.'s letter indicating that "grace had been restored". (well that is done, today I received the official paper.) That he would speak to the ministers and then send further notice. The next day: that he was ill! How I managed to stay alive was a work of art. Mimi had much worry and besides much to suffer from my mood. I was nearly insane. So it's not to be described how everything ran together.

Imagine, through help from Nahuys I have indeed acquired a certain indice of the theft (at least something worth the trouble of following up.) I am sending the pieces and statements to Rochussen. They contain something as:

"You wondered that I would not have received that letter, look here, an inquiry, and see how I have inquired!"

About that he was out of sorts again and replied:"Let some one else attend to it!" I called his attention that he should not have provoked me by his tone and stopping sending me money. I wrote him:
" if I had accepted your tone meekly Your Exc.would have had the right
"to hold me for a miscreant. I find no joy in running around in search
"of f200, but Your Exc. requested information and then I could not
"leave a stone unturned. In so far as I am concerned I believe I
"can spend my time better. Besides, everybody whom I contact about

"those unfortunate f200 do not grasp that it can be true because "they would not mail f200 without registration. Whoso does this "'must reimburse it.'"

In the meantime I was unaware on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th how things would run and so that I should and must think of means in order to help myself in the event R., at long last, had left me in the lurch. Consider that from lack of funds I had to decline mail from Edinburgh that lacked sufficient postage.

Six or eight days ago now I wrote to Top Smit, that big ship owner at the Kinderdyk. That is a large family. A year ago I went to see them from Antwerp on their steamer (one evening and a night) and we sat talking till 4 or 5 at night, the oldest member and I. Those people were very much to my liking. Simple and frank. The wife of the oldest son seemed to know my Ideas by heart, and many did at their home. Now I wrote them of my plight and said I needed a couple of hundred guilders.

Last night came a friendly wire; they will fulfill my request.

As soon as that money comes I'll be able to go to The Hague but I wont go till R. calls me. Every letter (also the angry ones) states: I will talk to the ministers and report the result. He must first do so, before I come.

Well, if I receive today or tomorrow I shall be able to make arrangments. I'm confident I will.

To R. I have written some amusing things, among others: "it would be better that henceforth you believe me at once, that is simpler and easier."

"Has the minister of War no shame by speaking of a "line" of defense? That's empty talk. The line that must be defended is the border. For war with Prussia I will pledge myself (at least if it is not being made impossible for me to remain Hollander) to die on that line."

(And that I mean. I dont want to see those damned Prussians in our country!0

"Just for once let one of your sons, the same as I have done, "study war-history, then he will see that war-making is cowardice "with rank of science."

"a field battle is a bet who can hide his cowardice longest."

(At Lutzen: Gustav Adolf, and at Dresden: Napoleon, both sides ran away.)

"an old soldier is an old virago."

(Of course. Ever since his youth he has been taught to rely on his mate, rear or foreman. Never on himself. Etc. etc.

I cannot praise Huet enough. He is so reliable. A man of his word. Now he wants to assume the loss of that f25, but that's not right. I requested him to send them and thereby approved of the regular way.

It's fortunate that I'll get some money in a little while since I have literally nothing left. Not even a piece of wax for sealing.

Dagh my dearest Tine, take care. Think that I do what I can. Dagh, dearest child, dagh! I have the best of hope. Before all because now I shall be able to move again.

LXVI.

(18 January 1868.)

Dearest Tineke. Yesterday I sent you a registered one, without money. Well, enclosed are 10 Thaler and (if you can spare them) one each for the children.

The money I received from the Kinderdyk f300, but am unable to send you more than this little because I really have to spend a good deal for getting ready in the event Rochussen calls me. His latest word is as always: "I will speak to the minister and send you word." I have to order a black suit, redeem belongings, etc. To Chateluex I must return fr.100.

Dagh dearest Tine. At the moment I have bustle. Dagh children!

LXVII.

Koeln, 21 January 67. (68? Tr.)

Dear heart. In a hurry, much good. I've been to Maastricht. Chateleux is most friendly. Coming home a letter from the Scotch publisher with money, a draft. This afternoon I will send 10 Thaler again. I've no time. Much good. Hope, you hear!

For political reasons I'll remain a few more days in Koeln. I want to be sent for, that was the agreement with R. And I do not

want to give him a pretext enabling him to say why do you come before being called.

Dagh dear Tine.

LXVIII

Koeln 25 January 1868.

Dearest Tineke.

That I've still not left from here is in order to give R. no excuse that I'm breaking the agreement. I'm awaiting a letter from him.

Interesting that these days (as a proof of enlivening) I have been able once more to protect some one. A young girl was close to being on the bricks. For the time being I have had her provided with a room in our house and she scans advertisements now. She seems to be a nice girl.

30 January.

From R. a very friendly but still singular letter. He complains about the minister of colonies being so prosaic! And advices me to postpone coming to The Hague till the elections are over. They are over. So he must have some recounts in mind. But I do not grasp why?

A few days ago I met with a girl who did not know where she would spend the night. I took her to Mimi, and in the house where we stay there was a small room for rent. The intention was for a day or at most two. Well, a more interesting adventure you never saw, she wont leave! For quite some time I had not laughed but that child makes me burst out laughi ng. Yesterday mimi and I told her that there

were heavy cares and that the room where she slept had been rented starting the first. "Oh," she said, "that's nothing. You (that's me!) must go to Holland anyhow, so leave a little earlier, then I can stay."

That's pretty bold, you say? Well, she is tender and good but cannot imagine that I would put her out on the street. She is as trustful as a child. Thereby she sings (without knowing music) very beautiful. I told her I had so many cares and that she was a burden to me. That makes her laugh and say all will come out all right. Now you must know that the real cause of her situation was that a gentleman had engaged her to learn to sing (since her voice is sublime) and then make her debut with the theatre, Well, after she had accepted that in good faith and quit her job in a shop for it, it became evident that the people would use her for something else. That angered her and in that mood I met her. She joined me at once and accepted my condolences as literally as a child would! She is a curious individual for study!

The Max Havelaar is already announced in the Scotch papers. Now I'm completely occupied with my correspondence with R. and the engagement with the Scottish publishers. 'Tis difficult not to spoil anything with one of the two.

You grasp how much, instead of all that rubble, I would rather write you something definite. But dear, good Tineke, do not blame me. I suffer enough under it.

Through my intervention Huet's position is much improved. He has, so it seems, received an official engagement (so writes Rochussen, and our good Nahuys, the translator of Max Havelaar, too) And.... Huet

Huet has not written me! False shame, no doubt, Because he has succeeded with my help, and I still have troubles. But good and solid he is. It will be resolved. He acknowledged voluntarily that I had done him a great favor, and called me a "magician" because I had managed to get in contact with the ministers from this distance here in Koeln.

Dagh dearest Tine, dagh girl!

LXIX.

Koeln, 12 february 1868.

Dear Tineke!

The matter with The Hague runs miserably. All the time I am about to tell Rochussen that I am through with all negotiations, and so my latest letter is rather strong. In order to keep you well posted I shall not be able to do better than to transcribe his latest.

"The Hague, 8 February, W. E. H. It makes me feel very sorry not to be able to inform you of something good, something definite. No matter how often I spoke to ministers always the same thing: appreciation of your support, but never anything positive. Perhaps they cannot quite agree perhaps you have not posed definite conditions and they are afraid of public opinion or for exaggerated demands from your side! Perhaps, and most probably, they are absorbed with the election struggle. Since this has produced so little good result they see no long life ahead and for that reason fear using energetic means. Perhaps the translation of Max Havelaar, and that by your friend Nahuys, has caused fear, I guess, but do not know.

Would it not be good if Your honorable wrote a non-exaggerated brochure to support the administration?

Mr. Busken Huet had decided to go to the Indies. I have sincerely written him to recommend you as his successor at Haarlem; but there seems little chance. I would like so much to help you out of your miserable position, to re-unite you with your family and supply you with a secure life. I do what I can but have no power and but a limited influence.

Might it be that Your Honor would leave Koeln, for whatever reason then, and need money for that, I am ready to supply you with it. When it should come to that, write me then and I shall casu quo send you a check from Amsterdam. Receive my good wishes for your future.

Rochussen."

And the reply:

Koeln, 10 febr. 1868.

Excellency! I am in possession of Your Exc. honorable writing of day before yesterday, and no matter how appreciative for the trouble it pleases Your Excellency to give himself, I must in all frankness declare honestly that the letter's contents astounds me as much as it saddens me. Your Excellence asks me if I need any money in order to come to The Hague. Already since December I waited -relying on the promised help- thereupon in vain, and in order not to be in need of money, I should have had to apply means which I left unused in connection with the negotiations entered into. For many long years I would not have been in need if only I could have decided to make use of the influence which I can bring about as soon as I give in

to surrendering my relation to my fatherland.

Are the ministers of a mind to continue shoving me aside -something that will be impossible as soon as I want to act- the consequences will be on their heads.

If I had been in contact with the government directly, namely the department of Colonies, indeed I would not have tarried 2½ months with a decision! But now it was difficult for me to do something whereby I would load the appearance upon myself as if I failed to appreciate Your Excellency's friendly intervention.

As for writing a brochure to support the current regime, then I must first have evidence that this regime aims to do justice, and so long they have not re-instated Havelaar, this is not the case.

I cannot support a regime that protects extortion and murder, and that's done so long as he is maltreated who protested against extortion and murder. The proof of improvement is easily rendered. My complete re-instatement means for the Indies: justice and humanity. The opposite portends: Continuation of the old crimes, and I, Havelaar, must not encourage crime. As then it would be easier for me to take part in the game, to be promoted to resident, and afterwards in the Netherlands, minister.

But also concerning European matters did I expect to converse with you and the count van Zuylen. As for the Chamber.... it is just as useless as the previous one. With the present manner of electing nothing can be done. Had I been in time in the Netherlands, and had

I been provided with the means to support this cabinet, then I would have taken care of a different result.

And I still can do so with another disbandment. But then I also believe to be entitled not to be considered as a meaningless secondary matter. Shall I not be believed, then the future will show whether I spoke truth.

Never has any one dare to engage me -yes, recently a certain Duymaer van Twist. Well the man has been put in his place. I myself have not read his scribbling.

If Your Exc. in accordance with your promises is interested in letting me come over, then I take leave to repeat to You what I said in De.: that for that I need f200. Could there be a question -which never can be the case- of recompense for the moral and financial losses that the course of the matter has caused me, then thousands would not suffice! To my poor wife it's not much better than murder. For weeks since she waits from hour to hour for a telegram that I am in The Hague. So be it, I have more than that to account for!

I beseech Your Excellency to distinguish well between what I think about the Netherlands, its government and Your Exc., and remain with the highest esteem and appreciation,

Your Exc. ready and thankful Servant,

Douwes Dekker.

How could Your Exc. get the idea that I might become a commissar for the Messrs. Enschdé? If people in The Hague remain deaf and blind

other things remain for me to do than writing the Haarl. Courant. Besides, I cannot be Huet's protege. He is, or was mine.*

---

*)(These transcripts remained behind and were later mailed with the next letter.) MDDS.

LXX.

Koeln 3 March 1868.

Dearest Tine. After all kinds of trouble and misery I am at last so far that I go to The Hague. That I do not wire and just write is because a telegram might make you think that this departure for The Hague amounts to much. I thought so too myself, twomonths ago but must confess that now I have but little hope. Rochussen seems willing but he complains about opposition, and right out he cannot do a thing, he being not a minister. My little belongings are packed up and I follow at one thirty. So I'll be there late tonight.

Dagh dearest Tineke, dagh Edu, dagh Non.

I am leaving depressed. But let's hope things wont be so bad.

LXXI.

The Hague, 6 March 1868.

Dear Tineke!

I have been here two days now and have visited R. twice. He is very polite and friendly, but you realize that I need a little time. Were he in a position to sign, we would be ready.... To explain precisely how things stand, is a task. The ministers are about to fall again, yes, their demise is unavoidable. Now, says R.

(and so do I) that they might remain with my support, and to disband the 2nd Chamber for the third time. In agreement with R. I wrote him so early this morning. During today's session he will give that letter to van Zuylen. Then he will introduce me to v. Z. and I am under tension whether they will be so bold as to stand off the liberal party. Everybody, including themselves, think that they must resign.

My conditions for support are that my resignation be withdrawn; re-institution of half-pay; re-instatement into the service and then at the disposal of internal affairs for rewriting the Constitution, and of foreign affairs for combatting count Bismarck. All of which is part of my today's note. I am curious to see how van Zuylen will accept this.

Briefly, I am sitting in a difficult chess game.

Mimi has forwarded your letter of 29 february. I cannot give you any answer whatsoever.

The worst is that by taking my time I fear I shall run out of money.

Do you want to know definitely how matters stand? I do not know! Now I think yes, and then no!

You realize that the ministers have to overcome much egotism and false shame in order to help me and acknowledge thereby that they need me.

Dagh, dear Tineke. Excuse my hurried, careless writing. My situation is so tense. Besides, I'm sick with a cold and await by the hour a note from v. Zuylen. I must buy myself a hat.

R. told me that Bekking died, and rather suddenly. He had a mistress at Scheveningen. With her he was when he suffered a stroke.

Dagh dearest Tineke!

LXXII.

The Hague, 19 March.

Dearest Tine! Do realize how since my arrival here I was unable to keep you posted because then I would have had to write you twice daily. It's like a chess game. Of course you want to know how the game is progressing. There have been moments that I thought I had lost, but.... finished it is not yet.

Rochussen is truly confidential and friendly. He talks with me by the hour and I can perceive that he likes me. There is no doubt of his sympathy. But he is out of favor with the king and that, he confessed, is why he cannot assume the lead.

Yet he has done me a great favor by introducing me to count van Zuylen, with whom I have free entry. "That's something!" Well now, van Zuylen is about to fall and our talks came down to more on help for him, than for me. Also, v. Z. can, of course, work only through Hasselman (Colonies). And till now I purposely did not talk to Hasselman since I feared to find an opponent in him as late resident.

Yesterday R. dropped me a note in which he proposed that I let myself be introduced to Hasselman by v. Z. I replied: "Very well, because you say so and because, alas, I fear that there cannot be done anything more negative to my cause. I am sinking into a slough of mediocrity." (This was a reference to a few lines in my drama, known to R., that speak of ministerial mediocrity. To him I can say all. We have played chess together and he gave me his photograph. I feel that he likes me and is sorry that he did not help me sooner, when he still was in power.

Now he has to work through count v. Z.who too said: "do go to Hasselman, he is favorably disposed towards you and acknowledges that van Twist treated you unjustly"

"Bully," I said. "I had feared that the former resident would be against me."

"No, no.... that's not so!"

After a little more confidential talking, I went to Hasselman.

The reception was more than good as instead of/me having to plead and demonstrate, *he* began with telling *me* that as ass.-resident at Pandeglang (remember the strawberry department?) he knew everything about Lebak, and had personally written a memoir in which the extortions were dealt with. He wondered why I had never cited it! He related to me of conditions at Lebak, instead of me having to do so.

Now every intelligent human being would say that I was ready! Yes, but....

In the first place the cabinet is about to fall. Just now there is a fierce struggle in the chamber and they are primarily condemned. The new chamber (after the disbandment) has delivered an almost similar result, that is: a so called liberal majority who want to assume power. For again disbanding the ministers lack courage, mostly since the king who should be the focus. . . . .

. . . .

(deleted)

All right, you say, but why can they not re-instate you before they resign? Rochussen too, says so. "But," he adds, "a minister who is about to fall too has no energy, no desire...."

Very pleasant for one who is the victim of it!*

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*)(In April 1868 Multatuli returned to Koeln without having accomplished anything. The Ministry Heemskerk van Zuylen resigned the 4th of June to make room for a liberal cabinet.

Months later an Indies' publication, and well the one to which mister van Lier (who until 1869 was a stenographer at The Hague) had become a contributor, was able to report that Multatuli had sold out to the conservatives.

Dekker thought that by following up this dispatch to its point of origin one would land with the thief of the letter that had been mailed by mister Rochussen with a f200 bank note enclosed, on December 27, 1867, at The Hague, by himself. Dekker would have enjoyed going into the matter but mister Rochussen was opposed to it.

It remained Multatuli's striving to let Tine and the children return. During the year 1868 he decided to hold public recitals in order to gather money for that purpose. The three acts of Vorstenschool that were completed, his essay on Free Study and the one about Civilization were the main motifs of his recitals. In the third volume Ideas many impressions from this tourney are recorded.

Those recitals did indeed bring in money, since he was indefatigable and traveled from one place to another, but there was very much needed too. At the hotel De Toelest in The Hague where during the negotiations with Rochussen, and later again he had lived, there were arrears of fl. 800. And there were many more debts to be paid. Very probably he would not have succeeded in having his family come over if not in that time a small legacy of f5000.- had become my share, which we now used for that purpose.

Along with that came that Multatuli in his recital tourney, mostly in the north, had met with many enthusiastic worshipers and admirers, some of them rich who made him the finest promises. One, a Frisian, who seemed to be highly fond of Multatuli, had explicitly said and repeated:"and consider you my banker from now on." Dek relyed on him for the future. If only

he had his family back with him, such was his plan, then he would continue to write his Ideas, this time for his own account by means of a periodical. And by that time he would call in the help of his "banker".

In the meantime he paid off debts and arrears right and left in order to "clear the deck" as he said, and to be free in his movements later on.

With touching love he established a home for his wife and children who at last, in february 1869 came from Italy to Holland.

And then? Alas! The ready money was soon used up, the Frisian "banker" reneged, and further.... but Multatuli himself has informed us of the details of the situation in his Ideas 1004 and 1005.

GLOSSARY.

Page	Line	Translation.
3	8	Broil.
	11	General Delivery.
10	1	Superior Force.
11	9	Departed
	19	Free Thought Society.
	21	Club of the Arts, Science, Literature.
	23	Precursor. . . .. Equiped.
12	3	Disloyal.
14	10	Under cover.
31	8	In parenthesis.
38	11	My worms, maggots.
40	8	Indulgence..... freedom.
	20	To cause you to laugh easily.
41	5	But the least millets.
45	25	All short, brief.
47	4	Interruptions
	16	So so. Such as it is.
	19	Cue. To be applauded.
		Untranslatable gibberish.
48	14	Renowned.
49	7	Of the day. Current.
50	10	There it is.
	18	In the second place
53	5	Thusly. therefore.
54	18	Never estimate number of supporters
58	5	Bad manners.
	11	Curious.
	13	How can I know?
61	8	Punch
	15	Burned out
	20	Take the body.
62	7	Take in.
	11	The Congresses. Such a congress is not what a vain people think.
63.	22	Affronts.
64.	11	Included.
66	14	Complete ablative.
67	4	Full powers.
	8	In effigy
	24	In charge
68	1	General agreement
71	14	Blunders.
73	17	But why do you speak then?
	21	After all.
74	12	Disgusting.
	24	Ready.
76	15	Poet.
77	10	And all is for the best.
80	8	The event, the occasion.

Page	Line	Translation.
81	5	The main thing.
	12	Divine right.
	15	Retrievable odors attest to divinity.
	17	Saturated.
82	15	Young man.
89	13	Waistline.
92	12	Criticism is easy.
93	10	Morsels, fragments.
94	10	I sing of those heroes who reign over, etc.
	37	On the track of a subject
100	12	Observe as a holiday
105	13	On the tip .... By chance.
107	16	Superiors who grow white in the service.
	22	Growing white.
108	17	Take note.
110	12	Idea.
113	7	Unsurpassed
114	3	
	7	So be it.
116	24	To perpetuate the king's memory
121	5	To be.
122		Newsletter.
		Newfoundland dog is a trained animal that saves life sans killing, while you amuse yourself killing those who approach you fondly, sans saving one at all. He stresses that his tirade is not of pure gold.
	14	In extension.
124	20	Free of charge.
125	8	Unenjoyable.
126	17	Take it or leave it.
129	12	The beauty spot on the pig.
132	21	Continue and achieve
133	4	To be or not to be
	21	That you will not settle yourself there.
136	6	In proportion
138	12	There's the rub.
	23	Sweetness
	25	Good augur.
139	1	Circumstances. Proportion. Relation.
	9	After finishing.
	23	Some indication
140	25	A known country.
154	3	By heart.
	9	Meanwhile
156	25	To clear my conscience.
161	20	Wash the dirty linen among ourselves.
164	12	Frank talk.
165	Note	Unfortunate error
167	1	Expectation

Page	Line	Translation
167	2	Toulon lies there
	11	Making progress
	12	Observe as a holiday.
	21	Spirit level.
170	20	So much the worse. Between us
	23	Last recourse. Compernsation. Makeshift.
174	13	Name:
	25	There are some such.
175	25	To spend one's money before one has it.
178	3	Disgust.
	6	And where all was of the best.
	19	That's not to be had.
182	16	Spite.
188	1	In danger of.
191	4	At a loss.
196	20	Attractive. Charming.
199	18	Implicated.
206	5	Good indication.
216	11	In that case.

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